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Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

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New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ben Yahia	(Tunisia)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

Briefing by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

Briefing by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I request the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now bring its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear a briefing by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic. On behalf of the members of the Council I welcome Mr. Kagame and convey to him our appreciation for his having accepted the Council's invitation to engage in an exchange of views on the situation in the Great Lakes region, an issue to which the Council attaches great importance.

I wish also to welcome His Excellency Secretary-General Kofi Annan and to express our appreciation for his having accepted our invitation to attend today's meeting.

In view of time constraints, I would ask representatives to limit their interventions to questions or comments.

I call on the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I have had the chance this morning to meet with President Kagame, and we have had a very good discussion. For the second time in less than one week, we are meeting again here in the Council to reaffirm our commitment to bringing peace and stability to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I believe the welcome presence of the President of Rwanda here today should strengthen our resolve to

make the most of this opportunity for change and ensure that it gives us new impetus towards a final resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. What is clear to this Council, and should be clear to all sides in the conflict, is that no country in the area can hope to enjoy stability while the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues and that all will benefit from its resolution. I therefore wish to commend President Kagame and President Kabila for the statesmanship they showed in meeting last week in Washington to discuss the challenges facing both countries and the entire area.

There are difficult issues of governance, national dialogue, democracy, accountability and reconciliation that need to be addressed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region as a whole if there is to be a lasting solution in the Great Lakes. There is also the issue of the continued existence of predatory armed groups. Although there is no easy military solution to this dangerous phenomenon, those guilty of the worst atrocities of human rights abuses — and especially those guilty of genocide — must not be allowed to escape unpunished. We must understand that all the countries in the region, in particular Rwanda, have legitimate security concerns.

Let me also commend the Government and the people of Rwanda for their efforts to build and renew their nation. Much remains to be done, however. The United Nations will continue to give whatever help it can to Rwanda in carrying out these tasks.

In welcoming President Joseph Kabila during his brief visit last week, many members of the Security Council spoke of the need to seize this opportunity for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, leaders throughout the region have responded to the latest developments in a way that suggests that they sincerely wish to implement the Lusaka Agreement in all its aspects. I hope we can build on this momentum and on the fact that no major ceasefire violations have been reported over the past two weeks.

I would like to mention one step that will serve as an important confidence-building measure as the United Nations moves to help the parties carry out the disengagement plan signed in Harare in December. The Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Major-General Diallo, is currently discussing with the authorities in Kigali and in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo the withdrawal of Rwandan forces and their allies from the town of Pweto, on Lake Mweru in Katanga. We understand that substantial, if not complete, agreement has been reached. MONUC is ready to deploy a team of observers to the town once all the arrangements are in place. A withdrawal from Pweto by Rwanda and its allies in accordance with the Harare disengagement plan would help set the tone for the remainder of the disengagement plan. It would also represent an important step towards compliance with Security Council resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000, which calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the report I intend to submit to the Council next week, I will propose a revised concept of operations for the deployment by MONUC. I will propose the deployment of additional personnel to monitor and verify the implementation by the parties of the Harare disengagement plan. Meanwhile, MONUC has already begun to take some initial steps which fall within the mandate approved by the Security Council in February 2000. Should the Council approve the revised concept, MONUC will be able to help the parties further in drawing back their forces from the confrontation line. This will reduce the risk of clashes and serve as a vital first step towards an eventual complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from the country.

We may also be on the verge of a new and more constructive stage in the process of bringing an end to the conflict and instability in the region. We should, however, not lose sight of the scale of challenges that remain. Indeed, it is my profound hope that the resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will bring peace to the entire Great Lakes region and, in particular, to Rwanda. We are also taking urgent steps to re-energize the intra-Congolese dialogue and I hope the summit that is being planned in the region will focus on this aspect of the problem. I think a new opportunity has presented itself and I urge this Council and every country in the region to do everything possible to seize it.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic.

President Kagame: I thank the Secretary-General for his introduction and I thank you, Mr.

President, for your invitation to me to address this Council.

I want to start by informing the Council that Rwanda has been trying to rebuild itself from the devastation caused by the genocide and other problems before that. Progress has been made in the area of the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country, in matters of reconciliation, in dealing with the questions of justice and in the bigger problem of socio-economic development.

However, this progress and the efforts behind it are being hampered by the general context in which this is happening — the context being what is happening in the region. This relates to the situation in the Congo, which I am sure many members of the Council have been following very closely. Without peace in the Congo and the countries of the region, development and this kind of progress definitely will not take place.

However, there have been efforts before, and these efforts have continued in order to try to address these matters that would contribute to peace and stability in the region. That is why we later on reached the peace agreement in Lusaka, though at later stages it became difficult to have it implemented. So, it is true — I agree, as has been said, that there is a need to take advantage of the change that has taken place in the Congo, however tragic that was in its coming. I discussed with the new President, President Kabila, many issues relating to what we can all do in the region to bring about this peace. That mainly focused on the implementation of the Lusaka peace process. My country has the desire to fulfil its obligations as demanded by the Lusaka peace process, or even beyond that.

There are really three core issues that must be addressed, in my view, in order to have the Lusaka process succeed. These are the issues on which the process was built. One is the inter-Congolese dialogue, which is talked about in the peace agreement. Hopefully this inter-Congolese dialogue will lead to a stable situation internally in the Congo so that problems will stop originating from the Congo and affecting the neighbouring countries.

The second core issue is how the problem of former Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and Interahamwe are addressed in this whole situation. This problem has been going on from May 1994 until this

moment. It has been discussed in different forums, and we have always, unfortunately, fallen short of some practical ways of eradicating that problem. So, that is the second core issue. I think that the Lusaka peace process is built on it, and it needs to be taken forward.

The third core issue is the withdrawal of foreign armies from the Congo. All three of these issues are addressed in the formula we have in the Lusaka peace process. If we go back to that and see what we can do to move the peace forward, then we most likely have a chance — with the change that has taken place in the Congo and with the statements that the new President has made about wanting to realize peace — not only in the Congo but also in the region. That is the impression I got from him when I was speaking with him.

However, the two of us, and maybe a few others, having discussed this issue is not enough. I think that everybody needs to come to our assistance — the assistance of the Congo, of Rwanda, of the region — in order to support this process so that it can be implemented. I have no doubt that the Council will continue to play its role in finding a solution, or solutions, to many of these problems that I have mentioned. I continue to call upon the Council to be helpful not only in bringing about peace but also in supporting the region in terms of socio-economic development.

With these few remarks, I look forward to the support of the Council, and I will be very ready to continue our discussion in case there are any questions. I will make whatever clarifications that might be required on these issues.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the President of the Rwandese Republic for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Council to comment on the intervention by President Kagame.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): It is a pleasure to see you here, Mr. President. Your presence testifies to the importance of our discussion today.

We are pleased to welcome President Kagame back to the Council and have listened carefully to his remarks. When the Security Council met with President Kabila five days ago, I said that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has the right under the United Nations Charter to insist on the withdrawal of all

foreign forces from its territory. I also said that the Government of Rwanda has a right under the United Nations Charter to insist that Congolese territory not be used as a launching pad for attacks against Rwanda.

There are obvious mutual interests here that should form the basis for a discussion. We hope that President Kagame and his colleagues in the region can begin to work together, instead of against each other, to forge a common security regime. We do not believe that Rwanda can secure its long-term security interests via a policy of military opposition to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Likewise, we do not believe that the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be accomplished through military means.

We believe that we are at the crossroads in the peace process. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and multiple Security Council resolutions constitute the expectations of the region and the international community. Now is the time to translate words into action. Now is the time for concrete steps.

It is important that all parties cooperate in creating and sustaining the conditions necessary for the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), something that we all want to see happen quickly and safely. It is also critical that the ceasefire hold, that no forward military movement occur and that the disengagement of forces begin. We welcome Rwanda's readiness to withdraw from Pweto and urge that this offer be supported and immediately implemented. In addition to the priority of disengagement, we agree with the Secretary-General that Pweto represents a critical confidence-building measure and a barometer of political will.

As we emphasized to President Kabila last week, all the Governments in the region have a common interest in neutralizing armed, non-State actors. We believe that lasting security for both Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo can come about only when their Governments build a cooperative relationship based on common interests, one that leads to the marginalization of the former Rwandan Armed Forces, Interahamwe and all other armed groups. In the case of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, those under indictment by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda should be brought to justice, and the rest need to be offered a credible and voluntary process of

disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement.

We must be frank with President Kagame. The human rights situation in areas under Rwandan occupation or the control of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) is deeply troubling. Information from the United States Government, the United Nations, other Member States, Congolese civil society groups and international non-governmental organizations paints an alarming picture. Rwanda's claims to the right of self-defence are badly undercut when so many Congolese civilians are victimized. We urge President Kagame to ensure that his forces and their Congolese allies respect fully the human and civil rights of the Congolese people.

During his recent visit, President Kabila reaffirmed his support for the Lusaka process. We are hopeful that these positive statements will create new openings for a peace so that all sides can address the common security interests that can and should form the basis of lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour and a great pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council meeting today.

We are glad for the opportunity to hear President Kagame today, and we welcome the good proposals he has shared with us to settle the conflict. We have also noted with great interest the meeting a few days ago between President Kagame and President Kabila. That dialogue, if it continues, as we ardently hope it will, will bring us closer to a settlement of the conflict. These are encouraging signs at a time when, as the Secretary-General said last week and again today, a certain calm has returned to the conflict zones of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Today there is undoubtedly an opportunity to be seized to relaunch the Lusaka Agreement process. But how long will this last?

Relaunching the Lusaka Agreement process and then finally proceeding to phase II of the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) requires the disengagement and withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo without further delay, pursuant to the accords signed by the parties to the conflict and to the relevant Security Council resolutions. I wish to recall that these resolutions, particularly Security Council 1304 (2000),

state that that withdrawal should be progressive and phased and should begin with the withdrawal of troops of the uninvited States in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The States to which these resolutions apply cannot subject their implementation to conditions.

The Security Council has already had the opportunity to emphasize that the presence of forces of aggression in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is unacceptable. It is the Council's duty to recall everywhere and at all times the fundamental principles of the Charter: respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. We have noted the willingness expressed by the Rwandese authorities to withdraw their forces from Pweto once the MONUC observers arrive. The latter must be deployed quickly, and we will follow closely how Rwanda lives up to its commitment. That will be a first step in the right direction.

I would also like to recall the concerns expressed by the Council about massive violations of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the eastern part of the country. There is also concern about information on large-scale plundering of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in Kivu. In this connection, we all await with great interest the conclusions and recommendations of the panel of experts created by the Security Council, which must submit its report at the end of March.

The return to stability in the region therefore requires first of all the implementation of the withdrawal of foreign forces. However, the internal aspect of the Lusaka Agreement is also necessary. In this connection, we welcome the encouraging commitments made by President Kabila, whose implementation we will follow with interest. It should be noted, nonetheless, that establishing an internal dialogue involving all political actors must not be confined to the Democratic Republic of the Congo alone. This is one of the keys to the settlement of the crisis for the region as a whole.

President Kagame rightly emphasizes his concerns about security. His concerns are legitimate, and the Security Council is aware of Rwanda's need to enjoy peace and stability within its borders that would not be jeopardized by foreign threats. We have all noted the efforts of the Rwandese authorities to settle the matter of the former Rwandan Armed Forces

(FAR), and we are pleased to note that many of them have already been reintegrated into the Rwandan Patriotic Army. We must continue in that direction. The matter of the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe militias will also undoubtedly have to be resolved, in part, between the Kinshasa and Kigali authorities. But assistance from the international community will also be needed. In this spirit, the Security Council has made it known that it is ready to envisage the deployment of MONUC personnel to Goma or Bukavu along the border with Rwanda.

The coming weeks must enable long-overdue progress to be made in settling this conflict. The meeting between the Security Council and the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement in two weeks, and the meetings and summits preceding it, should, if all the parties to the conflict make the necessary efforts, lead to an irreversible process of disengagement and withdrawal that will bring us closer to a resolution of this crisis. On this point, I would like to assure President Kagame of France's resolve to work for such a settlement, which must take into account the interests and legitimate concerns of all the parties involved.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation is honoured to see you, the Foreign Minister of Tunisia, presiding over today's meeting, and we wish to thank you and your delegation for the tremendous interest you have displayed in the issues before the Council this month.

The Jamaican delegation is please to join you, Mr. President, in welcoming President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, with whom the Security Council met last January. We appreciate his initiative to meet again with *the Council and thank him for his important statement* giving us his perspective on developments in the region. We note his express commitment to moving the peace process forward and the attention that he drew to the three core issues: the inter-Congolese dialogue, the need to address issues relating to the former Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and Interahamwe and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Last week the Council was addressed by President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we were assured of his commitment to relaunching the peace process. We view as a positive step and as a confidence-building measure the meeting

held between President Kagame and President Kabila in Washington last week.

My delegation's appeal is for the leaders in the region to seek reconciliation and aim at bringing about a peaceful solution to the crisis, which is affecting all the countries in the Great Lakes region. For my delegation, the Lusaka Agreement remains the most viable option for peace and must be adhered to by all parties, since in our view there can be no military solution to the conflict.

We note President Kagame's appeal to the international community to seize the moment. My delegation hopes that all the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement will reaffirm their commitment to the process by abiding by the ceasefire and withdrawing troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1304 (2000) and 1332 (2000), in conformity with the stipulated time frame of the Ceasefire Agreement and the Kampala disengagement plan of April 2000 and with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We agree that all Congolese must be fully engaged in the inter-Congolese dialogue, which is an important component of the Lusaka Agreement.

This should also be an opportune time for the parties to recommit to the subsidiary plan for disengagement of the Harare agreement signed in December last year. As the Secretary-General indicated, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) has already begun to take measures to support the disengagement, and the Secretary-General has informed us that he will be presenting to the Council later this month a revised concept of operations for the further deployment of MONUC as a basis for further action.

Peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be allowed to fail, as the cost of such a failure would be too high a price to pay for the region as a whole. The conflict is exacting a terrible toll on the civilian population not only of the Democratic Republic of the Congo but of the entire region. We again emphasize the need for this issue to be addressed within the framework of a comprehensive peace involving the entire Great Lakes region. My delegation therefore welcomes the regional initiatives taken so far, and we look forward to the regional summit involving

all the parties to the Lusaka Agreement, to be held later this month. We expect the meeting between the Security Council and the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement, also scheduled to take place this month, to benefit from the outcome and recommendations of the summit.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to emphasize that sustainable peace can be achieved only when all parties concerned rise above the differences which separate them and focus instead on the issues which unite them, and lay the groundwork for addressing the economic and social challenges facing the countries concerned.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): At the outset, Bangladesh would like to express its great pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over our deliberations. Your presence attests to the importance of today's meeting.

It is a special privilege for the Council to have His Excellency President Paul Kagame with us this morning. We are grateful to him for making the time to come here, despite his pressing schedule. Coming as it does a few days after our meeting with President Joseph Kabila, our interaction this morning with President Kagame offers an important opportunity to put the peace process in Central Africa back on track. We noted the three areas that he highlighted in this context. The statement by the Secretary-General outlined the areas where action needs to be focused.

The Great Lakes region has been at the centre of the Council's preoccupations for some time. We have seen various efforts being made at the United Nations and in the region to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. It is unfortunate that the immense suffering of millions and the colossal loss of resources have not brought about a significant change so far. Agreements are signed, certainly with the best intentions; but when it comes to implementation, there is little progress.

In our meeting with President Kabila last week, we noted his determination to make fresh efforts to bring peace to the country, to hold free and fair elections and to extend full cooperation to the United Nations. We spoke of a new departure. We are happy to note that the urge to look towards the future is shared among the leadership in the region.

We understand that efforts are being made for a regional meeting, possibly at the summit level, involving all signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire

Agreement. The Council should be supportive of such initiatives. It will be important to see substantive progress on the ground prior to our meeting with the Political Committee here later this month.

We welcome President Kagame's assertion that an opportunity exists and that it must be seized now. The Lusaka Agreement provides for a workable compromise for all parties and the subsequent plans detail concrete steps. In pursuing these agreements, the parties must take a realistic approach. The resolution of the most complex and the most intractable conflict of recent times will naturally require the most courageous decisions on the part of the leadership of the region. It will require hard concessions, difficult compromises and, above all, a lot of pragmatism.

The security concerns of the neighbours of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and related issues, will need careful consideration. The imperative of justice should be pursued with the ultimate goal of healing past wounds and promoting reconciliation between societies.

Peace has its costs, but the cost of war is certainly much higher. Given its immense natural and great human resources, the Great Lakes region can become an important positive force. The transition from senseless confrontation to regional cooperation is what the peoples of the region require. Their leaders can bring that about.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Mali is delighted to see the Council meeting under your authority, Mr. Minister, to consider the situation in the Great Lakes region. I should like to welcome the presence today of His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic, and of the Secretary-General and to thank them for their important statements.

We listened carefully to President Kagame and to the Secretary-General, who, like President Kabila a few days ago, enabled us to glimpse some encouraging prospects for the resolution of the conflict in the Great Lakes region. The position of Mali on this issue is well known, and I would not like to repeat it here today. I shall therefore confine myself to making a few brief remarks, in deference to your wishes, Mr. President.

First of all, I should like to underline the fact that Mali welcomes the new impetus for peace and offers its firm support for it. We believe that a lasting

settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo necessarily entails respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

Secondly, we believe that the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the Arusha peace agreement remain the viable bases for lasting peace in the Great Lakes region. In that connection, we call on all parties to show restraint and to cooperate fully in the implementation of those agreements and of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The time has come to put an end to a conflict that has persisted for too long and that has brought indescribable suffering to innocent people.

Thirdly, I want to stress that we strongly encourage the continuation of the talks between President Kagame and President Joseph Kabila, which began last week at Washington, just as we support regional initiatives and the efforts of the Organization of African Unity and of the international community to put a final stop to the conflict in the Great Lakes region.

I wish in conclusion to say that my delegation expects to make a useful contribution to the Security Council's meeting with the members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement, to take place on 21 and 22 February, with a view to advancing the peace process.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): We welcome President Kagame to the Council today. Rwanda has suffered the pain of civil war and genocide. In Ireland, we understand the consequences of intercommunal violence and the difficulties of building trust and understanding between communities which have been engaged in deep and sustained violence.

The Rwandan people and their Government have our full support and understanding in their struggle to build a free, secure, democratic and human-rights-based society founded on equality and on respect for diversity. We would be very interested in hearing any comments from President Kagame on progress towards intercommunal reconciliation within Rwanda.

Rwanda and the region will be unable to recover from their wounds while war continues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; earlier, President Kagame rightly stressed that fact. Ireland subscribes fully to the stated position of the European Union, which is that lasting peace in the Democratic Republic

of the Congo can be achieved only through a negotiated peace settlement that is fair to all parties, through respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for democratic principles and human rights in all States in the region, and through taking account of the security interests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of neighbouring countries.

We welcome the reassurance by President Kagame that Rwanda is ready to implement the Lusaka Agreement and to assist in bringing about an early and peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. President Kagame has highlighted to us the three main challenges which he sees in this process. We recognize the security concerns which led to the presence of Rwandan troops on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we agree that any lasting settlement will have to take account of the armed groups in the region, including members of the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe. However, we are not convinced that these concerns justify the extent of the current Rwandan military presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The same reservation applies to the number and disposition of troops deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by other neighbouring countries, regardless of the reasons put forward for their presence.

We join the Secretary-General in our interest in hearing from President Kagame about the timetable he would envisage for implementing the Harare disengagement plan, in particular when we can expect Rwandan troops to withdraw from Pueto, as we understand this to be under discussion between his Government and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Ireland looks forward with anticipation to the report that the Secretary-General is now preparing, which will contain a revised concept of operations for MONUC.

At the same time, we are concerned about any illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the various parties to the conflict. It is seriously damaging the international standing of those who are allegedly involved. We encourage all parties to give the United Nations panel of experts established to investigate this situation all the information it requires. We hope that

Rwanda will build on the readiness, which is already shown, to cooperate with the panel in its work.

The events of the past few days have given rise to a rare stirring of hope for the Congo and for the region as a whole. We still await the longed-for wind of change, but there is at least a sense of movement in the air. The visits to the United Nations of President Kagame and of President Joseph Kabila, and their meeting in Washington, have shown that the dynamic for peace can come from within the region itself. The Secretary-General earlier complimented the statesmanship which enabled that meeting to take place, and we agree with that.

Ireland urges President Kagame to continue his contacts with all the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We look forward to further progress in advance of the forthcoming New York meeting with the members of the Lusaka Political Committee.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for leading us today. Your presence here, I think, testifies to the importance of this meeting.

It is extremely good to have President Kagame with us. I think that, from the comments he has heard so far from around the Council table, he will have a very clear sense of where the Council is coming from. I do not want to make any real comments; I would like to put some questions to President Kagame, subscribing in particular to what the representative of Ireland has just said as a foundation for what I am going to say, coming as we both do, along with France, from the European Union's position on this issue.

In the past few days, since President Kagame's meeting with President Joseph Kabila in Washington, we have had further discussions with the Congolese President and with his authorities. It is becoming clear to us that the new Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo accepts the principle of combined security for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for Rwanda and for Uganda, in particular – there are other States involved as well. They have indicated to us specifically that if the talks that are now beginning and that must continue – because dialogue is essential here – focus as a prime objective on the combined security of the Great Lakes countries, then they can see some progress being made. They will respect Rwanda's legitimate interests if Rwanda

respects theirs. I would very much like President Kagame's confirmation that he accepts that as a basic principle of what we are going to try to do over the next few weeks, because certain things follow from that, and, of course, follow from what has already been written in terms of Council resolutions, the Lusaka accords and the disengagement agreements to which Rwanda is party.

As a sub-question, President Kagame mentioned as one of his three core issues the need to settle the issue of the members of the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe; could he indicate to us how many fighters bearing arms we are talking about? Some perhaps could be reabsorbed into the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) or into Rwanda's structures; some will not be. How many are we talking about, that President Kagame is concerned about?

Secondly, does President Kagame accept the Secretary-General's proposal of a first confidence-building measure: withdrawal from Puto by President Kagame's forces, in combination with the deployment, by arrangement, of observers from the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)? I think that if President Kagame could take the first step in implementing the disengagement agreements we would begin to get somewhere. It would be extremely important and would put pressure on other parties to make balanced disengagements which get the thing going. And that, after all, is what we need in terms of the steps that have to be taken over the next few weeks.

Thirdly, will President Kagame go to the Lusaka meeting, which, I understand, has been arranged for 12 February, of heads of State of the region? We believe that his presence there to continue these discussions is exceptionally important. And there, or elsewhere, will he meet President Joseph Kabila again soon? President Kabila has indicated to us that he wishes to continue his bilateral communication with President Kagame, and we would like President Kagame's reciprocal agreement in principle to that.

The next question is: Has President Kagame given instructions to his armed forces to respect Congolese property and to refrain from any exploitation of the mineral wealth of the Congo? That is a top requirement of the Security Council and we will be pursuing that. I hope that that is taken very seriously by his Government.

Finally, will President Kagame take action, within the scope of his responsibility in practice in that region, for the protection of human rights and to ensure that child soldiers are not recruited into any military activity in the area of the Rwandan Patriotic Army's operations?

I think all these questions are very important for our discussions and I hope that we can make progress over the next few weeks leading up to the meeting on 21 and 22 February with the Political Committee in this Council.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): First, we would like to warmly welcome you, Mr. President, as you preside over our meeting this morning. We would also like to join our colleagues in welcoming warmly President Kagame to this meeting.

Since you, Sir, have urged us to be brief in the interests of time, I will just mention three points this morning.

The first point that is clear, especially after meeting President Kabila and now having met President Kagame, is that we have a unique window of opportunity to relaunch the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. It is clear, judging from the atmosphere in this Chamber this morning and when we met President Kabila, that there is a certain expectation that we should take full advantage of this window of opportunity. In the nature of these things, however, this window of opportunity can close very fast, so we hope that if, as a result of this meeting, there is some forward momentum, we will have made a useful contribution. We would therefore urge all the parties concerned to make a serious and concerted effort to meet the increased expectations that have been generated by these two meetings.

The second point I wish to make is that we are pleased that plans are under way to consider the deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). We believe that MONUC can be a key catalyst in changing things on the ground in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but for its deployment to take place, we need an effective ceasefire and the disengagement of all foreign forces. All the parties must adhere fully to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and to the Harare disengagement plan. We also urge immediate implementation of

relevant Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 1304 (2000) and 1332 (2000).

My third and final point is that we agree, of course, with all those who have said that there can be no peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo until all foreign forces are withdrawn. However, a durable peace — again, as many have said this morning — cannot be achieved until the valid security concerns of all the parties have been addressed.

We are also aware, listening to the remarks made this morning, that there is another complication. The vast territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo offers the potential for plunder, exploitation and extractive economic agendas. In this regard, we hope that all the parties involved in the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will realize that the fruits of long-term economic development are much richer than the fruits of such short-term economic agendas, and we hope that all the parties involved will realize that, if we can move towards an effective peace process, all the parties involved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will benefit.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to convey our pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over this meeting. I also thank your delegation for having made the arrangements for us to meet today with the President of Rwanda.

My delegation welcomes President Kagame warmly and thanks him for coming here to have this dialogue with the Council on the situation in the Great Lakes region and its implications for international peace and security.

Last week in this Chamber, in connection with President Kabila's visit, we expressed our firm resolve to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the countries of the Great Lakes region. We also stated our clear intention to require the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to fulfil their commitments to establish peace in the region and we expressed our desire to promote a swift deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in favourable working conditions.

Today, we would like to make precisely the same points to the President of Rwanda, because we feel that this is indeed a window of opportunity to promote

peace in Africa. We were pleased to hear him speak of renewed support for the Lusaka process and for the United Nations presence in Congolese territory. We believe that this is the moment for the entire world to witness action being taken towards peace by the political leaders of the Great Lakes region, such as a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a disengagement of forces monitored by the United Nations, an orderly withdrawal of foreign forces and a normalization of the security situation along the borders.

Two actions provided for in the Lusaka Agreement are of great importance to stability in the region. The first is the disarmament of the armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the second is the repatriation of their members to their respective countries of origin. In this connection, we would greatly appreciate any remarks the President of Rwanda may wish to make on the repatriation of refugees and other persons of Rwandese origin currently living in Congolese territory.

We recall with deep pain the events of 1994 in Rwanda, which gave rise to many of the problems currently engulfing the Great Lakes region. We believe that the proper administration of justice in Rwanda and gradual reconciliation among the Rwandese people are an inherent part of a lasting peace in the region. The course of justice must be firm towards the perpetrators of genocide so that the Rwandese communities can look to the future with confidence.

As members of the international community, and in particular as members of this Council, we are prepared to offer and guarantee our assistance.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): My delegation highly appreciates the fact that you, Sir, are presiding over this important meeting. My delegation joins the others in welcoming President Kagame to this meeting and wishes to thank him for his important statement. Norway has closely followed the developments in Rwanda after the genocide in 1994 and we remain committed to supporting democracy-building and humanitarian efforts in the country through the United Nations and other organizations. Norway has supported the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda since it was established and we firmly believe that those responsible for the genocide should be held accountable.

The current situation in the Great Lakes region is closely linked with what happened in 1994, and I appreciate the opportunity for the Security Council to meet with President Kagame to discuss the way forward in the context of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The Lusaka Agreement continues to be the path towards a peaceful solution to the complex conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. Recent statements from African leaders have created a new situation, which must be utilized to further facilitate peace. There is now, as has been stated, a window of opportunity. The meeting later this month between the Political Committee of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the Security Council is a timely and an important opportunity in this regard. We urge the parties to explore thoroughly, through regional consultations prior to that meeting, any political avenues that might be available for further consideration at the meeting. In this light we note with interest the contact in Washington last week between President Kagame and President Joseph Kabila.

Last Friday, President Kabila addressed the Security Council, and we noted his desire to pursue a policy of reconciliation. We believe that full commitment to peaceful negotiations remains indispensable in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

I would like to reiterate the support of the Government of Norway for the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The Agreement states that nothing in the Agreement shall in any way undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It further states that the parties to the Agreement must commit themselves to immediately addressing the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbouring countries. This means that all foreign forces must withdraw from the Democratic Republic of the Congo according to schedules drawn up by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the Joint Military Commission. It also means that there are legitimate security concerns that have to be addressed jointly by the parties and the international community.

At the same time, while expressing understanding for the precarious security situation that Rwanda is facing, my Government is of the opinion that this cannot justify deploying Rwandan troops — or

Ugandan troops, for that matter — several hundred kilometres inside the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Full deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) as soon as the security situation allows will be an important step in safeguarding Rwanda's and other countries' security concerns. Any support provided to the "negative forces", which the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe represent, must cease immediately in order to facilitate the peace process.

Furthermore, the efforts to rebuild peaceful relations in the Great Lakes region must take due account of the ongoing illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We urge all parties to the conflict to cooperate constructively with the United Nations Expert Panel established for this purpose.

The high-level diplomatic activity during the last few months is an indication of the willingness of African leaders and leaders from other countries to support the peace efforts in the Great Lakes region. In conclusion, permit me to urge the parties to exercise the necessary flexibility in the search for a political solution to the conflict. The United Nations must stand ready to facilitate this important process.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Your participation, Mr. President, in this meeting of the Security Council today shows how important the situation in the Great Lakes region is in the Council's agenda.

May I greet His Excellency President Paul Kagame of the Rwandese Republic and express gratitude to him for his readiness to meet with members of the Council in order to exchange opinions on the problem of settling the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our fundamental position in favour of the earliest possible political settlement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the basis of the preservation of the territorial integrity of that country in accordance with the Lusaka and subsequent agreements, and also in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1304 (2000) and 1332 (2000), remains unchanged.

We in Russia are closely following the development of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after the recent tragic event there. We note with satisfaction that the new leadership

of the Democratic Republic of the Congo confirms its dedication to a settlement of the conflict on the basis of the Lusaka Agreement and expresses its readiness to enter into dialogue with its neighbours on the issue of ensuring security in the subregion and to achieve national reconciliation and democratization in its country by opening up the inter-Congolese dialogue. We hope that in the near future these statements will be given tangible confirmation, and we call on all States engaged in the conflict not to miss the window of opportunity offered for a renewal of the peace process.

It is essential to break the vicious circle of mutual distrust and take genuine steps towards a settlement of the conflict. In this context we welcome the readiness of the Rwandan leadership to start a withdrawal of forces from the Pweto region, one of the most likely to flare up. We also call upon the other parties to the conflict to fulfil their obligations under the disengagement plan and to refrain from activities that might lead to a further destabilization of the situation. In general we attach the greatest importance to the earliest possible withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo under the time frame of the Lusaka Agreement, on the understanding that, as required by Security Council resolutions 1304 (2000) and 1332 (2000), this process should start with a withdrawal of those forces that entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo without the invitation of the Government.

Of course, we fully recognize that the long-term settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region of Africa is impossible without a solution of the illegal armed groups. We call upon all parties to the conflict to cooperate in ensuring the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation of members of the illegal armed groups in order to create conditions for security for all the countries of the subregion. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that from our viewpoint, solving this problem by force is impossible. For the process to be successful, it must be based upon a democratization of political life and a solution of inter-ethnic problems, not only in the Democratic Republic of the Congo but in all neighbouring countries.

We are particularly alarmed by reports of mass violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which are not under Government control. We call upon those who are

concerned not to allow such violations and to cooperate with international humanitarian personnel by providing free access to all those in need of assistance.

This month the Council has to review the fulfilment by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) of its mandate in that country. This entails an analysis of the extent to which the parties to the conflict are cooperating with the Mission and are fulfilling their obligations concerning ceasefire and disengagement of armed forces. If the results of this review show that the parties are filled with a genuine political will to carry out these tasks, this will undoubtedly help the Security Council in considering the deployment of the second phase of MONUC peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Wang Donghua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over today's meeting. We also appreciate the Secretary-General's presence and his important statement. The Chinese delegation welcomes President Kagame to the Council and his exchange of views with Council members on the situation in the Great Lakes region.

Several days ago, Council members had a candid exchange of views with President Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on the conflict in that country. China believes that such an exchange of views is conducive to the efforts of the parties in the region to seek peace there. Turmoil and conflict in the Great Lakes region are attributable to profound historical ethnic factors and also involve poverty, intrinsic contradictions and external intervention. From the tragic genocide in Rwanda in 1994 to the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we have been able to see that these contradictions and factors have interacted and are interlinked.

Various parties have repeatedly emphasized that a coordinated and comprehensive strategy must be adopted to deal with the situation in the Great Lakes region. Only when peace and stability are restored to the entire Great Lakes region can peace and stability in the countries of the region be guaranteed. No country can possibly build its own peace and development on its neighbours' wars and conflicts. Therefore, the Chinese side hopes that every country in the region will seize the opportunity to use political judgement

and decide to settle the conflict peacefully through dialogue and consultation.

The new Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has repeatedly emphasized its commitment to relaunching the Lusaka peace process, to conducting political dialogue and to cooperating fully with the United Nations. China hopes that the parties concerned will respond positively to that and prove to the international community with actual deeds their sincere desire to seek peace.

The Chinese delegation wishes to emphasize three points. First, the inter-Congolese dialogue is critical for the advancement of the Congolese peace process. However, that dialogue should be free of external intervention or interference, not to mention military intervention. Secondly, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be respected. This is a principle that every Member of the United Nations should observe. Thirdly, security in the border areas between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the countries concerned should be guaranteed.

We also believe that the achievement of peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbouring countries represents the biggest challenge before the United Nations. The positive roles of the United Nations and the Security Council are crucial for the early realization of peace in the Great Lakes region. China supports the Security Council's taking concrete measures, increasing inputs and deploying peacekeepers to the border areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and the other countries concerned as soon as possible, when conditions permit, in order to address the security concerns of the relevant countries and facilitate the settlement of the conflict.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): First of all, I wish to thank you, Mr. Minister, for presiding over this important meeting. The delegation of Mauritius is very pleased to welcome Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, to the Security Council Chamber this morning. We thank the President for his important briefing.

In the wake of the recent tragic event in Kinshasa, the Security Council received guarantees from Rwanda that it did not intend to take advantage of the situation. Similar guarantees were also received from Uganda. We are glad that these guarantees have been respected,

and on that account, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to remain largely peaceful.

There is no doubt that the Lusaka Agreement constitutes the only basis for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, indeed, in the whole Great Lakes region. Last Friday the new President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in his statement to the Security Council, reconfirmed his country's commitment to move the Lusaka process forward and to actively pursue the inter-Congolese dialogue. We would like to see all the parties to the conflict reaffirm their commitments similarly. We believe there is today an excellent opportunity for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region.

Indeed, for the last few weeks we have been hearing statements of commitment from the parties to the conflict to move the Lusaka process forward. Now is the time for these statements to be translated into concrete action by all those concerned. In this regard, the highest priority undoubtedly is the implementation of the disengagement plan signed in Harare in December. In this regard, we have noted with satisfaction that Rwanda has offered to go beyond the provisions of the disengagement plan and withdraw its forces to a distance of up to 200 miles. We welcome this positive commitment by Rwanda. Our goal, of course, is to bring about the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the earliest.

We are confident that the meeting of heads of State of the region in the coming days will add new impetus to the momentum already created to advance the Lusaka process. We call for the earliest deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1332 (2000).

The dire conditions prevailing in the Great Lakes region are largely a result of the illegal circulation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons and the use of mineral and other resources for financing paramilitary and organized rebel groups. We are therefore looking forward to the report and the findings of the United Nations panel on illegal exploitation of natural resources and other sources of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is due next month.

We are extremely concerned by the humanitarian situation arising from the instability in the Great Lakes region. All the countries of this region face the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons. Although the humanitarian relief agencies are doing a commendable job in alleviating their suffering, we would like to see the international community make more efforts to provide further assistance to these people, who find themselves in dire economic conditions. But there is no doubt that only when peace and stability are firmly established in all the countries of the region will the end of human suffering be ensured.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to add that no progress can be achieved unless the leaders of the Great Lakes region show their determination, will and commitment to engage fully in bringing stability and peace to the region. We believe that the time to do so is now.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): It is a great pleasure to see you, Mr. Minister, presiding over our meeting. We would also like to join previous speakers in welcoming President Paul Kagame to this Chamber and thanking him for his very important, comprehensive and constructive briefing.

As is known, and as has been clearly confirmed by President Kagame, security in the Great Lakes region depends directly on the security situation in each individual country. The general analysis of the situation proves that the main causes of conflict in the region, as well as of overall instability, are ethnic divergence, weak political governance linked to the lack of national dialogue, the presence of uncontrolled armed groups, flows of refugees, fluid borders and poverty.

In this regard, we would like to put special emphasis on the problem of fluid borders between countries, which has become one of the main causes of insecurity in the whole region. This factor leads to the uncontrolled movement of armed groups and refugees and does not contribute to creating a favourable political environment for strengthening national dialogue. In this regard, we would like to underline the crucial role to be played by the international community in resolving the problem through the elaboration of a comprehensive regional strategy. The resolution of specific conflicts in the area, in particular in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in

Burundi, requires regional approaches involving a wide range of existing confidence-building mechanisms. In this context, we entirely support the idea of convening an international conference on the Great Lakes region, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, which could become an important step towards the elaboration of a constructive, comprehensive, regional approach to address the problems.

At the same time, we believe that the effectiveness of international support for the maintenance of peace and security depends on the implementation by the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo of their commitments in the framework of the Lusaka Agreement and other peace arrangements, and their readiness for national reconciliation and dialogue.

The crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo generates the main context of general insecurity in the Great Lakes region and has a very negative impact on the fragile peace in the Central African Republic and on the peace process in Burundi. It should be recognized that without the restoration of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there can be no lasting solution to the crisis in that part of the world.

I would like to reiterate the position of my Government by underlying the need for the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and all relevant resolutions by all the parties as the key to the settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the restoration of sustainable peace in the whole area.

We welcome the outcome of the meeting between President Paul Kagame and President Joseph Kabila in Washington last week, at which the parties reaffirmed their commitment to a constructive dialogue aimed at resolving existing differences. We are convinced — and this has been stressed by members of the Council today — that there can be no military solution to the most complex conflicts in Africa. We urge the leadership of the countries in the area to take a pragmatic approach towards the peace process, to become good neighbours and to cooperate fully for the sake of progress and peace in Africa.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia.

The Security Council's preoccupation with the Great Lakes region is clear; it is attested to by the many meetings scheduled this month to address the situation there. I should like to single out in particular the meeting with the Political Committee of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to discuss the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that these meetings will have practical results that contribute to reactivating the peace process and fulfilling the aspirations of all the people to peace, security, stability and progress.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, which supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and provides for the establishment of conditions conducive to security and stability for neighbouring countries, remains the best framework for arriving at a negotiated settlement to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We expect the parties to the Agreement to prove their commitment to the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We believe that circumstances are favourable for giving a new impetus to the peace process. The international community is called upon to encourage all the parties concerned and to help them build the pillars of lasting peace in the region, including by providing assurances to the parties concerned about their security and stability, thereby improving the opportunities for conciliation, solidarity, cooperation and development in the continent.

We look forward to the earliest possible deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This will translate into action the determination of the international community to shoulder its responsibilities with regard to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region as a whole.

We sense that there is a desire to move towards peace. We expect the parties concerned to undertake the practical steps necessary for the realization of that objective. Tunisia supports and encourages each and every initiative undertaken by Rwanda or any other party aimed at dialogue, conciliation and cooperation in the framework of mutual respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each State in the region.

We welcomed President Kagame's meeting last week with President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that the dialogue will continue and advance in the interest of the peoples of Rwanda, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the entire region, who yearn for a better tomorrow.

For years, Tunisia has been following developments in the Great Lakes region. Notably during its presidency of the Organization of African Unity in 1994 and 1995, Tunisia contributed to African efforts to ease tension in the Great Lakes region and to bring about rapprochement among the States of that region. President Ben Ali has taken numerous initiatives to that end. Tunisia has consistently supported all peace processes on the African continent, and hopes that they will help strengthen peace, security, stability, development and cooperation in the region.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic, to respond to the comments that have been made and the questions that have been raised.

President Kagame: I am grateful for this additional opportunity to talk about the very important issues that have brought us here today. I have listened with great interest to the various serious concerns so well articulated by members of the Council with respect to the situation in the Great Lakes region, and to proposals concerning how we should be dealing with that situation.

I would respond by saying that most of those concerns are genuine; some of them are correct, others are not fully correct, and still others are perhaps lacking in facts or information. I shall try to address as many as I can on that basis.

First of all, in my view, most of the concerns that have been raised will in fact be addressed and dealt with if we focus on implementing the peace process that was agreed on at Lusaka. Sometimes, taking up issues in a very fragmented way is not very helpful in addressing the whole situation in a comprehensive way. Lusaka talks about all the things we have been discussing: it talks about disengagement; it talks about withdrawal of forces.

With withdrawal and other things taking place, most likely there will be no forces on the ground to blame for one thing or another. I think that some of the problems exist because we have failed to do the most important thing: to try to focus all our energy on making sure that the peace process is implemented. Sometimes we have not been able to differentiate between those who openly and clearly are violating the ceasefire and the peace process and those who have tried to meet their obligations. Sometimes measures have been taken that in actual fact cause, in one way or another, a delay in the whole peace process by trying to revise what had been agreed to by everybody — the signatories of the peace process.

For example, we spend so much time talking about "invited" and "uninvited" forces, when in actual fact the peace process, signed by everybody, says that all forces must withdraw. Then somebody decides to begin an argument about "invited" and "uninvited" forces; this adds to the length of time that should be spent on discussing the most important issues and on perhaps reaching an agreement on them. I think the issue is clear under the Lusaka peace process. Everybody, including the President of the Congo and the Government of the Congo, is a signatory; they agreed to the total withdrawal of forces. Actually, that is the most crucial thing — if it had happened at the time it was supposed to have happened. The issues of who goes first, who goes last and who does what have been introduced by somebody; that causes delays of its own, and we accept that. That is one problem.

On the issue of withdrawal, Rwanda is ready to withdraw its forces as agreed under Lusaka, and in conjunction with other problems being resolved — because forces came into the Congo for a certain reason, and Lusaka also addresses that reason. This should be taking place if we are serious about the implementation of the peace process — and Rwanda in particular is serious about the implementation of that process. At one point we even offered suggestions for trying to speed up implementation. For example, somebody talked about the proposal put forward by Rwanda when the disengagement that had been agreed on was not taking place: Rwanda decided unilaterally to take measures that would support the peace process by withdrawing its forces 200 kilometres, pulling them back towards Rwanda's border. Failure of that was caused by the Government of the Congo. In fact, the

Congo itself did not even deny it; it was clear and open.

We are still ready to take some of these initiatives, which would help advance the peace process. But that is not an end in itself; our pulling back or doing other things does not constitute an end in itself. The end is for everybody eventually to do what they are supposed to do and what they are asked to do in the peace process.

I want quickly to address some of the other concerns that have been voiced, for example the human rights problems that have been talked about.

This is a problem. In actual fact, the background of the problem we have in the Congo is the violation of human rights. That is the background. That is what we are trying to address, but I would rather look at it more comprehensively by saying that the human rights violations in eastern Congo are as bad as those in the west, north and south of the Congo. I would not advise the Council to discriminate about violations of human rights. The violations of human rights have been taking place in different forms throughout the territory of the Congo — in Kinshasa, in Lubumbashi, in northern Katanga and in northern Kasai.

One of the reasons for the failure of our withdrawal, when we tried to do it, was actually the violations of human rights by the Government. This withdrawal failed because of a number of things. We wanted and requested United Nations observers to come and be placed in some areas. Clearly, their numbers were not sufficient, so perhaps they needed to be brought into some specific, important areas to observe our withdrawal and events following it. The United Nations was not able to deploy in time, so we asked whether we should actually continue and do it without the United Nations deployment. There was an agreement that we could withdraw. When we withdrew our forces, the forces of Kabila moved into areas where we had been and killed people in northern Katanga and northern Kasai because the population was being accused of having been collaborators with the rebels who are fighting the Government or with Rwanda. There was therefore a mass movement of people following our forces, running away from the areas from which we had withdrawn. This was something we had expected; we had wanted the United Nations observers to be there, to observe and to be able to apportion responsibility and place it where it belonged.

So violations are taking place throughout the Congo. When we see on television people being shot and thrown in the rivers in Kinshasa, this must be talked about. These are very serious violations of human rights. In the eastern Congo, where we are deployed, there have been violations of human rights by the many forces that are operating in that area, which we have actually been fighting: the Mai-Mai, the members of the former Rwandan Armed Forces, the Interahamwe and the other groups. We have sometimes asked the rebel forces to look into that and to bring to book their own forces who may have been involved in it. The Government of Rwanda does not hesitate to take action against any of its members who get involved in any violations of human rights. This can be attested to by the courts in Rwanda that handle these cases. Individuals who have committed human rights violations are apprehended, brought to Rwanda and tried by the courts. This is done in broad daylight. We do not condone violations of human rights.

We have not been able, however, to control every household, every road and every forest to ensure that nothing happens. Most of the things that happen are happening because of the forces that are not controlled. Unfortunately, this is a situation that we have had to live with for quite a long time and that is the background of why we are in the Congo in the first place. It has been to try to fight this kind of thing and to ensure that it does not happen.

On the question of humanitarian aid workers, I am surprised that it is not known that the forces from Rwanda are actually about the only friends they have in that situation. They are the ones who are on their side, protecting them. The other problem is that they are not even there; actually, they do not come. I wish these humanitarian workers were there to help the population. They are not there. They are scattered; they are very few. There should be more than there are today to help in that situation, and we shall continue to try and help as much as our limited capacity allows.

Of course, sometimes people hear of violations of human rights. They do not fully understand to whom they are attributed. The other day, not long ago, somebody was accusing our country of violating human rights in Bunia, killing the people there. It took me a long time to convince these people that there is not a single Rwandan deployed in Bunia. This is an area that is totally different from where we are deployed, but somebody there is writing accusations

that Rwanda is violating human rights in Bunia. Yes, there are violations of human rights taking place in Bunia, problems between the Lendu and the Hema that we have all read about in the papers. We are not there. Rwanda is not deployed in Bunia — not a single soldier.

I really wish to put some of these things in the right perspective because this Council, unfortunately, does not always have credible sources of information. The United Nations has a presence in the Congo — a Mission authorized by this Council. I think some of these things should be brought to light in a better way.

As to the exploitation of resources, which many people have talked about — it should not be there. I would also ask the Council, when it finds the time and if it finds it appropriate to do so, to help us to define what the term "illegal exploitation of the resources of the Congo" means. It seems that people have different understandings about this term. I am sure there may be people rightly accused of exploiting resources in the Congo, but from the stories I have heard it is not really black and white. I think there is a grey area that needs to be sorted out. For example, there has been talk about exploitation of diamonds and gold. We shall convey all the information we have to the commission that has been established. I am glad that the commission has been established to look into that, but it will serve this Council very well if the commission acts professionally, thoroughly and objectively, and not politically, in looking at the problem. It is my personal view that, sometimes, some of these problems have tended to be diversionary — they take us away from the real issues that we should be addressing and do not help us to prevent some of these things from happening. We know of some cases — and we shall be happy to inform the committee concerned — in which there have been people trading in diamonds and gold for the last 15 years in the eastern Congo — going through Burundi, going through Rwanda, going through everywhere — and they are still in that business. They are doing it with the Congolese. If the rebels who are in the Congo are also illegal Congolese and cannot therefore do anything in that territory with people who have been doing that business all the time, it is an issue and an area that the Council could help to clear up, so as to really know what we are talking about when everybody is on board.

We shall be glad to make our own contributions to clear the air about illegal exploitation of resources,

which has tended to take us away from dealing with the main theme: the peace issue, with the security issues and with the withdrawal of forces, and getting out of this situation. We shall be able to engage the committee and provide whatever support and information they require from our country. They have already learned that. They have come, and we have talked to them. I do not know whether they found us lacking in any way — I have not been informed about that. We are ready to continue.

The other thing is that they could be very helpful if they, in our case, have things to really compare. If today they have figures about how many suspect diamonds or how much suspect gold is being exported by Rwanda, then we would very much appreciate that information, because this can easily be looked for and found. This would help us to know the actual extent to which the issue that is being highlighted has gone. Insofar as Rwanda is concerned, I think that there has been an exaggeration about this issue. I think that there is a grey area that is not well defined and that I would request the Council to help us define so that we all fully understand what we are talking about and so that we can see whether we are rightly being accused or whether more explanation is needed.

If I may talk about the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe, somebody was interested in the numbers. The numbers are one important aspect to find out about and to know. But the other very important aspect that is important to know is not so much the numbers as it is the very fact that there are Governments and people that are turning these numbers into a threat by giving arms and training and by associating with it. I think that this is very crucial, and we should not lose track of that by just talking about numbers. This Council has been involved with so many resolutions about the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, the genocide suspects and how past resolutions to deal with that are to be put in practice.

I have always wondered why there have been shortcomings in even following up, as one way of actually dealing with this problem, to make sure that nobody actually associates with these groups. This Council has done that in the case of Angola, with UNITA. They have threatened sanctions. They have done everything for the countries, for individuals and for groups that we associate with UNITA, and they think that has helped in that situation. When it comes to the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, there is condemnation

and understanding that they create security problems, but it always falls short of having clarity on the question of how you deal with the people who associate with these groups and that make them a security threat to Rwanda.

So, I really hope that the Council will also help us to address that problem; otherwise, with numbers it is hard to be very specific. I am sure that the precise numbers are mainly with those who are using them or who have been helping them. I am sure that in giving them arms and giving them clothes and food, they have numbers. We do not have precise information, but we think that, given what we have been noticing on the ground and what we get from those we have been able to capture at the front line when they are fighting, the figure would be about 15,000 of them.

But again, this is not the only issue. The issue is taking this 15,000 and adding other forces that constitute a problem for our country. If it were just about numbers this would be easy. In 1997 we repatriated 2 million of our refugees; among them there were over 40,000 ex-FAR and militia. We reintegrated them into the rest of the society. We have reintegrated over 15,000 former soldiers in our own army. So this is not a problem. The problem is that these others stayed out, and they are being helped to become a threat to our country. That is where the issue lies. That issue must be addressed if we are to finally realize security on both sides. We need to look at security issues on all sides, and that is really something that would be easier to do.

We are ready. Once we have gone through with the implementation of the Lusaka peace process, the big countries in the region should get together and think of how we can create a framework on a permanent basis that will address security issues in the region. This has happened in other regions; I do not see why it cannot serve us as well. But this is something that will come once we have overcome this crucial stage of moving ahead to implement what we have already agreed to in the peace process. Otherwise, we will continue with our endeavours to try to achieve peace, whether it is through the Lusaka framework or through talking to different individuals that can make a valuable contribution to realizing final peace. We shall continue to engage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, under Joseph Kabila. We shall always be open, and we shall be ready to work with other countries in the region towards this objective of realizing peace in our region.

Once again, I am very happy for this opportunity to clear up some of the issues that have been raised, but I remain available to go on with whatever I might not have covered fully.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank President Kagame for the clarifications he has provided. I would also like to thank all the delegations that participated in our debate for their kind words addressed to me and to my country.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

*Provisional***4274**th meeting

Thursday, 8 February 2001, 12.10 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ben Mustapha	(Tunisia)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Amin
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Kavanagh
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Issouf Oumar Maiga
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sergeev
	Singapore	Mr. Mantaha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Burnett
	United States of America	Ms. Miller

Agenda

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Establishment of the list of candidates for Permanent Judges.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 12.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Establishment of the list of candidates for Permanent Judges

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2001/108, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's

prior consultations. It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Bangladesh, China, Colombia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1340 (2001).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.15 a.m.



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4274th meeting

Thursday, 8 February 2001, 12.10 p.m.

New York

Corrigendum

Page 2

The name of the representative of the United States of America at this meeting should be: Ms. Willson.





Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4275th meeting

Friday, 9 February 2001, 12.55 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ben Mustapha	(Tunisia)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Ocaziones
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Ireland	Mr. Kavanagh
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Bhuckory
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Mr. Mantaha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Ms. Willson

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2001/45).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 12.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2001/45)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea, document S/2001/45.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council, recalling all previous resolutions and statements of its President regarding the situation in Eritrea and Ethiopia, notes with appreciation the Secretary-General's progress report of 12 January 2001 (S/2001/45) and subsequent update pertaining to the matter.

"The Security Council reaffirms the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Eritrea and Ethiopia, and further reaffirms its continued commitment to a peaceful definitive settlement of the conflict.

"The Security Council, reiterating its strong support for the Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities signed by the parties in Algiers on 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601), strongly welcomes and supports the subsequent Peace Agreement between the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (S/2000/1183) signed in Algiers on 12 December 2000 ("Algiers Agreement"). It commends the efforts of the Organization of African Unity, the President of Algeria and his Special Envoy, as well as the United States of America and the European

Union, for their role in achieving the Algiers Agreement.

"The Security Council encourages both parties to continue working towards the full and prompt implementation of the Algiers Agreement. In this connection, it further welcomes the agreement reached by the parties on 6 February 2001 to move forward with the establishment of the Temporary Security Zone on 12 February 2001.

"The Security Council expresses its strong support for the Secretary-General's role in continuing to help implement the Algiers Agreement, including through his own good offices, for the efforts of his Special Representative and for the contributions of relevant United Nations entities.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction that the Algiers Agreement includes mechanisms for the delimitation and demarcation of the common border and for addressing claims and compensation, and that the parties are cooperating with the Secretary-General in these matters in accordance with agreed schedules. It draws the urgent attention of Member States to the fact that funds provided to date for border delimitation and demarcation, through the United Nations Trust Fund established under resolution 1177 (1998) of 26 June 1998, remain clearly inadequate to meet the expenses of the Boundary Commission for the work entrusted to it under the Algiers Agreement. While expressing appreciation to those Member States that have already contributed financially, the Council calls upon Member States to consider providing further support to the peace process, including through contributions to the voluntary Trust Fund, in order to assist the parties in rapid delimitation and demarcation of the common border in accordance with resolution 1312 (2000) of 31 July 2000 and in accordance with the Algiers Agreement.

"The Security Council notes with appreciation the expeditious deployment of the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) allowing the parties to redeploy and rearrange their forces as scheduled. It expresses appreciation to the troop-contributing countries

and to those Member States that have provided UNMEE with additional assets.

"The Security Council urges the parties to cooperate fully and expeditiously with UNMEE in the implementation of its mandate, including through the complete redeployment of troops consistent with the Algiers Agreement, the establishment of a direct air corridor between Addis Ababa and Asmara to ensure freedom of movement for UNMEE flights, and the conclusion of the necessary Status of Forces Agreements, including identifying suitable accommodation sights for UNMEE.

"The Security Council further urges the parties to facilitate mine action in coordination with the United Nations Mine Action Service, including through exchanging and providing existing maps and any other relevant information to the United Nations. It notes with concern that mines and unexploded ordnance remain the pre-eminent threat to the safety and security of UNMEE troops and the population in and around the future Temporary Security Zone. It calls upon the international community to support generously non-governmental organizations with resources, skills and expertise in demining so that, in coordination with UNMEE and the United Nations country teams, they can assist both Governments in this undertaking.

"The Security Council encourages both parties to continue to exercise restraint and to implement confidence-building measures, to continue the release and voluntary and orderly return under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) of civilians that remain interned, to release remaining prisoners of war and facilitate their return under the auspices of the ICRC, and to fulfil their commitments under the Algiers Agreement to afford humane treatment to each other's nationals and persons of each other's national origin.

"The Security Council calls on the parties to ensure the continued safe and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in need, to guarantee the safety and security of all UNMEE, ICRC and other humanitarian personnel and to respect strictly the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council recognizes that the effects of the war have exacted a heavy toll on the civilian populations of Eritrea and Ethiopia, including through the internal displacement and outflow of refugees. It urges the respective Governments to continue to redirect their efforts towards the reconstruction and development of both economies, to work towards reconciliation with a view to normalizing their relations, and to engage in constructive cooperation with the other neighbouring States in the Horn of Africa, with a view to achieving stability in the subregion. It further urges contributions from the international community, including the United Nations agencies and the international financial institutions, in support of the reconstruction efforts of both countries.

"The Security Council remains seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2001/4.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.



Security Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2001

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4276th meeting of the Security Council

Held in private in the Security Council Chamber at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 12 February 2001, at 3 p.m.

At its 4276th meeting, held in private at 3 p.m. on 12 February 2001, the Security Council considered the situation in Guinea following recent attacks along its border with Liberia and Sierra Leone, the situation in Liberia and the situation in Sierra Leone.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Security Council met with the delegation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mediation and Security Council. The delegation was composed of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali (leader of the delegation), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Togo and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, to whom invitations were extended in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, who was invited in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, the President also extended invitations to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Liberia and Sierra Leone, and to the Permanent Representatives of the Gambia and Guinea to the United Nations.

The Council had a full and constructive discussion with the delegation of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, in the spirit of true partnership between the Security Council and ECOWAS.





Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

*Provisional***4277th** meeting

Tuesday, 13 February 2001, 11.05 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ben Mustapha	(Tunisia)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Cooney
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Toure
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Stoffer

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 11 05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Sweden and Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mladenovic (Yugoslavia) took at seat at the Council table; Mr. Schori (Sweden) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Guéhenno: I am pleased to provide members of the Security Council with an update on developments in Kosovo since our last briefing in mid-January.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, has established four priorities for the next phase of the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). These are, first, to establish a legal framework for provisional self-government in Kosovo, including preparations for province-wide elections; secondly, to complete the set-up of an effective law enforcement and judicial system; thirdly, to establish regular dialogue with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and open an UNMIK office in Belgrade; and fourthly, to resolve legal property issues in order to build a more accountable and responsible local public administration and facilitate economic reconstruction. I will outline progress on each of these priorities before proceeding to more general issues.

The first priority is the development of a Kosovo legal framework. UNMIK is currently engaged in an intensive exercise to elaborate the key principles which will serve as the foundation for future discussions on the legal framework for provisional self-government. Once this process has been completed in the coming weeks, the Mission will begin close consultations with both its local interlocutors and the international community. The mechanisms through which powers will eventually be transferred to a provisional self-government will require careful scrutiny if the transfer is to be efficient and effective. The final decision on the powers and competencies will be taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

The mission's institution-building pillar, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), estimates that it will take eight months to prepare for province-wide elections. Much of the initial set-up work for the elections can begin before the legal framework has been finalized. Nevertheless, decisions on key elements of the framework must be completed by April if elections are to be held this year. Progress has already been made in the registration of habitual residents of Kosovo, and this work is indeed essential in order to update the voter lists needed for general elections.

Meanwhile, UNMIK has begun to restructure the Joint Interim Administrative Structure to take account of the municipal election results, which provided a measure of the level of support enjoyed by Kosovo's political parties, and to prepare for a smooth transition to an eventual locally managed structure. In this regard, UNMIK has identified some areas, including law

enforcement and the judiciary, where powers should be retained by the Mission. Departments are being encouraged to assume responsibility for the budgetary aspects of their activities. This is indeed essential, as the Kosovo consolidated budget should become increasingly reliant on domestically generated funds.

Work has continued on the implementation of the municipal election results. There has been further progress in the establishment of the municipal assemblies. So far, 18 of Kosovo's 30 municipalities have appointed their chief executive officers, and seven have fully set up their boards of directors.

The second priority is the development of law enforcement and the judicial system. The provision of law and order remains a high priority for UNMIK. To enhance the rule of law, a more unified judicial, police and civil administration coordination structure is being considered. Continuing work is being undertaken to improve the quality of the judiciary in Kosovo. Because of the urgent need for a justice system when UNMIK started, over 400 local judges and prosecutors were appointed. An assessment of their performance is now being undertaken, and screening mechanisms for prospective candidates are in place. This is a delicate task, and the Mission considers that negative political consequences, as well as local resistance, are possible.

UNMIK currently has 12 international judges and 5 international prosecutors who are responsible for dealing with the most sensitive cases related to war, ethnic or organized crimes. One key responsibility of these international personnel is to ensure that human rights are respected and that ethnic bias does not intrude into cases. However, this can sometimes strain the working relationship between local and international judges and prosecutors and may be perceived as lack of confidence in local judicial personnel. The Mission must therefore balance the need for effective and non-biased justice, which is supported by the presence of international personnel, with the importance of rehabilitating Kosovo's judiciary.

On the police side, UNMIK has established the Police Organized Crime Intelligence Unit. So far, 3,138 cadets have graduated from the Kosovo Police Service School. The focus for training is now shifting from basic training to supervisory training.

The third priority is the development of relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the

opening of an UNMIK Belgrade office. The democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia proper have provided an opportunity for a more constructive and meaningful relationship with Belgrade. The establishment of an UNMIK Belgrade office has been agreed in principle.

Negotiations are continuing with Yugoslav Government representatives on detainees and missing persons from Kosovo. The negotiations have focused on the exchange of accurate and complete information regarding the detainees, release of humanitarian cases and details of a proposed amnesty bill. UNMIK has requested that the amnesty bill should be extended to include all Kosovo Albanian detainees. Those not covered by the amnesty bill should be considered for release under other mechanisms available to the Serbian authorities, such as a presidential decree. The Mission has also suggested that any remaining Kosovo Albanian detainees should be handed over to UNMIK for a judicial review of their cases.

The fourth priority has to do with property issues, public administration and economic reconstruction – the socio-economic base of the development of Kosovo. Work is continuing on both the public and private sectors of Kosovo's economy. The Kosovo consolidated budget is now about 68 per cent funded from local resources, with 32 per cent coming, therefore, from donor contributions. These figures can be compared with those from 2000, which show a 50/50 split between local resources and donor contributions. The Mission is working to improve economic regulation and decrease the isolation of Kosovo's economy from those of its neighbours, as well as to encourage direct foreign investment in Kosovo. Work is continuing on plans to restore the viability of the Trepca industrial complex. Policy issues under consideration include generating support from the international community, developing a structure for engaging Kosovo residents in deliberations and a strategy to engage the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the process. Other elements also to be considered are tackling the issues of interim management, ownership and debt claims, environmental damage reconciliation, restructuring and worker retraining, and the establishment of appropriate mining laws.

(spoke in French)

I should now like to turn to more general questions, first of all, those relating to security issues. There have been recent demonstrations in south Mitrovica which were sparked by the death of a Kosovo Albanian youth killed by a grenade attack on 29 January. The demonstrations became a focus for protest by which Kosovo Albanians wanted to show that they did not trust the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to be able to provide them with the necessary security. The protests appeared to be planned to some extent, as some protestors had gas masks and seemed to be well organized in small groups under local control. The Kosovo Police Service showed how useful it was and demonstrated its increasing effectiveness by ensuring that further gatherings in south Mitrovica were peaceful. The protests elicited little reaction from the Kosovo Serbs. However, there were reports of threats against the Kosovo Albanian minority in north Mitrovica; one house was reportedly burned down and abandoned apartments have been occupied. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), some 23 Kosovo Albanian families remain on the north side of the city.

In response, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Commander of KFOR visited Mitrovica and held discussions with both the local Albanian and Serb leadership. A joint declaration was signed by the Special Representative, the Commander of KFOR, the Mitrovica Municipal Assembly and local political representatives.

The declaration calls for enhanced security and for an expansion of the zone of confidence, ensuring freedom of movement for residents. It calls for the return of displaced persons, and for the establishment of functioning political structures. Work has begun to achieve these goals. However, representatives of all local Serb factions have signed a statement of non-concurrence with the joint declaration, arguing that the plan excluded Kosovo Serbs and that expansion of the zone of confidence was only for north Mitrovica. UNMIK is continuing its efforts to elicit Kosovo Serb support for the plan, so that the plan will have the support of all communities.

Another security concern relates to tension in the Presevo valley and in southern Serbia. Increased clashes, illegal checkpoints and training activities in the ground safety zone surrounding Kosovo. UNMIK and KFOR continue to take action against persons and activities inside Kosovo known to support the ethnic

Albanian fighters and that use the safety zone as a staging area. UNMIK is working with KFOR to implement effective measures in selected areas along the Kosovo side of the administrative boundary to control more effectively the movements of individuals attempting to support ethnic Albanian fighters. KFOR has over 100 suspected ethnic Albanian fighters in detention.

Discussions are continuing with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and with Serbian and ethnic Albanian leaders to take effective measures to stop displacement and to encourage returns to the Presevo area. An inter-agency team including representatives from the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been sent to the region to conduct an assessment of basic humanitarian needs in the Presevo valley area. These efforts, along with those of the European Union and other international organizations, and a package of confidence-building measures developed by the Government in Belgrade, could help stabilize the situation and avert any negative impact on the Serb population in Kosovo.

Let me say a few words about problems relating to the treatment of minority communities in Kosovo. There appears to be a rise in attacks on Kosovo Serbs and their property in Prizren, Mitrovica, Gnjilane and Pristina. Pressure on Kosovo Serbs to sell their property remains high, particularly in municipalities where Serbs are mixed with other populations, such as Kosovo Polje in the Pristina region. Dialogue has begun with a wide range of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Serbian and Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian political and community leaders on the envisioned framework for Serb returns to Kosovo. The UNMIK Department of Reconstruction is also preparing to assess damaged housing and public buildings in 24 locations identified as having the potential for Kosovo Serb returns, pending identification of funding for necessary repairs to those buildings. Similar efforts are being reviewed for the return to Kosovo of members of other communities.

In the area of civil administration, the situation faced by Kosovo Serb teachers remains difficult following intimidation in northern Mitrovica, Strpce

and Leposavic. Kosovo Serb teachers and school support staff have been offered the same contractual conditions as Kosovo Albanian teachers and support staff. However, as a result of pressure from their communities and from Serbian educators, they have asked to receive different contracts temporarily.

In the more general area of economic activity in Kosovo, despite sustained efforts to promote economic recovery, unemployment in Kosovo remains very high. Social assistance programmes for the neediest unemployed have been established. A public works scheme is under development to provide temporary employment for uneducated and unskilled people.

Turning to the question of depleted uranium, a draft report on the effects of depleted uranium has been prepared by a World Health Organization assessment team. It concludes that the threat to public health and the environment from depleted uranium is minimal. It also recommends an information campaign to encourage public reporting of discoveries of depleted-uranium rounds, improved medical health data and an effective information system on the health situation in Kosovo to help closely monitor all aspects of the situation, including with respect to depleted uranium.

To conclude, the four priorities set out in January by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General are the road map for UNMIK's activities in the coming months. The development of the legal framework for elections and provisional self-government, which would provide the people of Kosovo with substantial autonomy, is a complex exercise. It should not be rushed, nor should there be any unnecessary delay. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General will, of course, retain the final say on all these fundamental matters.

Other pressing issues which we must address include the continuing threats to the safety and security of individuals and the ongoing struggle to establish the rule of law in Kosovo. The situation in the Presevo valley and the recent unrest in Mitrovica have had a significant and regrettable impact on the activities of UNMIK, as well as serious negative implications for fulfilment by KFOR and by UNMIK of their responsibility to provide a stable security environment in Kosovo. In the short term, these challenges, these threats, may increase. In the longer term, UNMIK will continue to look to the Security Council for the political support that it needs to find the just balance

between the day-to-day administration of Kosovo and setting up the interim administration in which the people of Kosovo can enjoy a substantial level of autonomy, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank most warmly Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his clear and precise briefing. The position of the European Union, which France entirely endorses, will be put forward by the representative of Sweden. I would just like to make a few comments to complete and supplement what Ambassador Schori will be saying.

It is essential that violence be curbed in Kosovo. Since June 1999, impressive progress has been made. The international community has played a decisive role in this evolution. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) has met the challenge before it in a frequently difficult environment. It has taken courageous action to preserve the security of the peoples. This was the case just recently in Mitrovica, where some 20 soldiers from KFOR were wounded.

However, reducing tensions is first the responsibility of the Kosovars themselves. To promote the involvement of citizens in this struggle against violence, the Kosovo political leaders bear particular responsibility. Their active support is required. In this connection, following the Mitrovica events, the statement published on 1 February by Albanian leaders in Kosovo to condemn the violence was a positive sign.

In the Mitrovica area as well as elsewhere, détente must be sought. We give our full support to the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR to bring the violence among the ethnic groups to an end and to guarantee to all the inhabitants the security that all ethnic groups have the right to claim, and also to overcome as quickly as possible the division amongst the communities.

Relating to the holding of general elections, I would like to emphasize that it is necessary at the start to have a precise definition of the nature and functions of the provisional institutions that will be elected. Preparation in impeccable conditions is also a prerequisite. Everything must be implemented in order

to ensure the participation of all communities, particularly the Serbian community, in the elections.

At this time, continuing discussions amongst the Kosovars of all ethnic origins concerning the temporary structures of the autonomy, under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, is a necessary step. It would be desirable for the other parties to be informed of those discussions and then to be associated to them. From this angle, setting up an UNMIK office in Belgrade is a positive measure.

With regard to the situation concerning the administrative border between Kosovo and the southern part of Serbia, the presidential statement of the Security Council on 19 December 2000, as well as the statement to the press on 30 January 2001, made possible a strong condemnation of the activities of terrorist groups.

Political steps taken recently by the Belgrade authorities, under the aegis of President Kostunica, are part of the attempt to find a peaceful solution. We should support this willingness by Belgrade to undertake, despite any difficulties encountered, negotiations with local representatives of the Albanian community. Support by the international community for economic, political and social measures to help the peoples of the area, particularly those of Albanian origin, will also be necessary. The European Union, for its part, has already earmarked close to €1 million for humanitarian work in the Presevo region and intends to do more in the future.

KFOR, for its part, has strengthened its staff on the administrative border. These measures will make possible closer monitoring of illegal activities in that area. Any solution in the Presevo valley would also require that there be cooperation between KFOR and Belgrade, including in the field.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for his detailed briefing.

In spite of the efforts made by the international community for a long time now, the situation in Kosovo remains a very complex one. In recent days, there has been a serious aggravation of the situation in Mitrovica, where there have been massive conflicts between Albanian and Serbian inhabitants in which the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in

Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) have become involved. There is a continued tension in the ground security zone in the Presevo valley. We all know that this has been caused by the constant feeding from Kosovo of the Kosovar Albanian extremists that have been entrenched there.

The Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Balkans, Carl Bildt, recently called the situation in the Presevo valley the most serious threat to stability in the Balkans. We carefully followed the activities of the international presence in preventing the forays of extremists and preventing the spread of inter-ethnic conflict. However, the events that are unfolding in Kosovo and neighbouring regions reaffirm the conclusion that we have repeatedly made to the effect that, unfortunately, for the time being we do not see any qualitative breakthrough for the better in compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

There is no perceptible progress in the launching of the political process leading to a comprehensive settlement of the problem of Kosovo. It is a bad resolution — if it is being resolved at all — of the problem of the return of refugees and the restoration of a multi-ethnic society in the region where all nationalities would be guaranteed equal security. In this context, we regard as subject to dispute the advisability of the speedy holding in Kosovo of region-wide elections. Without ensuring the necessary level of security, there can be no return of refugees, who number, I would recall, approximately 200,000 individuals. This means that such elections would not be representative in nature. There is also no clarity in the question of the powers of the future regional bodies, which must be developed with the direct participation not just of the various groups in Kosovo and not just of the representatives of the international community, but with the direct participation of Belgrade.

All of this speaks to the inappropriateness of artificially forcing the urgency of preparing for elections in Kosovo. We note that recently the leadership of UNMIK has tried to take a balanced approach to this question of preparing for elections. There is no doubt that before the beginning of the campaign, there should be full clarity as to the understanding of the so-called substantial autonomy, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

As we understand it, that is the purpose of the United Nations in preparing UNMIK legal frameworks for self-governing bodies in Kosovo. But I repeat once again, preparations for such frameworks should necessarily involve the participation of the authorities in Belgrade. Of course, the Security Council itself has to play a central role in the definitive solution, both with regard to the question of the concept of central autonomy for Kosovo within the framework of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that of the time-frame for the holding of elections.

Constant attention should be given to the situation in the ground security zone in the south of Serbia. We believe that the latest proposals by Belgrade to solve this problem deserve full support. I have in mind the programme to settle the crisis in the south of Serbia, which was adopted on 6 February by the Government of Serbia, as well as the statements made by Yugoslav authorities regarding the possibility of holding talks with Albanian leaders in the Presevo Valley area.

On the whole, we believe that it is extremely important for the international community to overcome stereotypes in its views regarding the initiatives emerging from Belgrade. We trust that doing so will help to bring about the opening of an UNMIK office in the capital of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as soon as possible. We would once again like to emphasize that without the close cooperation of the international presence with the Yugoslav authorities, we can have no compliance with resolution 1244 (1999) or arrive at a comprehensive resolution of the situation.

One of the steps to be taken in this regard must be — finally — the signing of the relevant agreements on the status of the international presence in Kosovo. The Security Council could give that process the relevant political impetus. The signing of those agreements could also help strengthen the legal basis to ensure the safety of UNMIK and Kosovo Force staff in their efforts to achieve comprehensive compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

We continue to be concerned about the ongoing serious contradictions in the activities of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. I know we will soon discuss this particular topic in the Security Council, but I would also like to touch on it today as well. In both the Security Council and the

General Assembly, we have repeatedly spoken of the inadmissibility both of the politicization of the Tribunal and of a selective approach to identifying those who bear guilt for the Yugoslav tragedy. However, prejudice in the work of the Tribunal, including anti-Serb bias, persists. We can see this above all in the activities of the Tribunal's Prosecutor, Ms. Carla Del Ponte.

Another issue to which we have repeatedly referred is the fact that, despite our many requests, information on the details of the tragedy in Racak has been concealed from members of the Security Council. It was only in February of this year that we finally received a reply, signed by Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, which told us that the Ms. Del Ponte, the Tribunal's Prosecutor, had decided that she could sanction the distribution of only a summary of the report of that investigation, but not the full text of the report itself. Unfortunately, the summary we received is vague in nature and does not give a clear picture of what actually happened in Racak or who was responsible for the tragedy. We believe the top-secrecy in which the Tribunal has tried to veil its factual study is absolutely inappropriate. We are convinced that the members of the Security Council must finally receive the full text of the report on the events in Racak. Ms. Carla Del Ponte does not represent a private organization, but rather the Tribunal established by a decision of the Security Council, which should be responsible to the Council. If she has some secrets from the Council, we believe that is unacceptable.

A similar approach was shown in November of last year, when we asked the Secretary-General to distribute as an official document of the Security Council a text of a memorandum of understanding between the Tribunal and the headquarters of the armed forces of the alliance in Europe. That memorandum was concluded between the Tribunal and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1996. However, despite our requests, the text of that memorandum has thus far not been issued and remains secret. Therefore, on 28 December 2000 we were compelled to issue a reminder of that request. We continue to await a response. In the meantime, Ms. Carla Del Ponte has publicly stated that such a memorandum does not exist. To put it mildly, that is an attempt to mislead the world community. Everyone knows that such a memorandum does exist, and references to it are to be found in reports submitted by

the Secretary-General to the Council. We insist that the text be distributed to the Security Council and the we dot the i's and cross the t's on this issue.

We also feel that it is time to talk about the future activities of the Tribunal itself. Resolution 1329 (2000), which the Security Council adopted on 30 November 2000, asks the Secretary-General to submit proposals as soon as possible regarding a date for the cessation of the temporary jurisdiction of the Tribunal. We believe the Council could already have been informed about proposed time-frames for compliance with its instructions.

With regard to the use of depleted uranium munitions in Yugoslavia by NATO, which Mr. Guéhenno referred to today, we believe that the studies conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization have not given us answers to all the questions. Therefore, along with many other countries, we advocate the conduct of an independent experts' study of the consequences of the use of such munitions in order to determine the real dangers to the environment and the population, as well as to overcome the obstacles to determining steps to be taken to prevent threats to people's health. NATO countries that took part in the military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should assume the relevant costs.

The Security Council should also continue to keep under its review all aspects of the situation in Kosovo and the activities of the international presence in the region. We understand that the new leadership of UNMIK and Mr. Hans Haekkerup need time to look at the situation locally and determine priorities for their activities. We of course support the efforts of Mr. Haekkerup in every way, in order that he may be able to determine clear ways to reach complete and comprehensive compliance with resolution 1244 (1999). We trust that once he is settled in Kosovo the members of the Council will find it possible to hear directly from him an appraisal of the situation and his views on how to achieve full compliance with resolution 1244 (1999) and how to normalize the situation in the region. We hope that such a meeting with Mr. Haekkerup will take place in the Council next month.

We also believe it appropriate to think, in consultation with Mr. Haekkerup, about the issue of a new Security Council mission to Kosovo. That mission

would of course include a visit to Belgrade, and perhaps also visit the Presevo Valley if the security situation allows. We trust that, in the week to come, the members of the Security Council, along with our colleagues in the Secretariat and the leadership of UNMIK, will discuss the specific parameters of this proposal.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing on the situation in Kosovo.

It has been about a month since the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) assumed his responsibilities. His predecessor, Mr. Kouchner, has left behind a firm foundation on which to build, but the task of the new Special Representative is by no means an easy one.

In our statement to the Council last month, we underscored a number of priorities for Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hans Haekkerup. We are happy to see that he has already been acting on some of the priorities, particularly focusing on the preparation of a legal framework for the forthcoming general elections in Kosovo and guaranteeing security as a top priority for UNMIK.

In today's statement, I will limit myself to the following four points relevant to recent developments in Kosovo.

First, curbing violence and improving security continue to be the top priority in Kosovo. All arrangements must be put in place that will make all people, irrespective of their ethnicity, feel safe. We are concerned that yet another spate of violence occurred in Mitrovica late in January and that the anger of the crowd was directed against the United Nations peacekeepers. We hope that the declaration signed after the incident by the Kosovo Albanian leaders, which was also endorsed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, will work to restore calm in the city. We believe that, without stabilization of the security situation in Mitrovica, it is impossible to address the longer-term issues involving the future viability and integration of the city. We urge both parties in the northern and southern parts of the city to exercise restraint and to protect their minorities.

Secondly, with respect to missing persons and detainees, we appreciate the emphasis given by the new

Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the return of all Kosovo prisoners detained in Serbia. We are encouraged by the new amnesty bill currently in the Serbian Parliament for the release of prisoners. The process needs to be expedited and all who would be covered by its provisions should be promptly released. Those who will not fall under the scope of the amnesty law should also be returned to Kosovo. We support Mr. Haekkerup's proposal that their cases be processed through a judicial review conducted under United Nations supervision.

We expect a comprehensive solution to the issue of missing persons and detainees in Kosovo. We believe that a resolution of this problem will significantly contribute to the reduction of inter-ethnic tensions. Last month, we wanted the Secretariat to brief us on the outcome of the mandate of the Special Envoy on Persons Deprived of Liberty, Ambassador Henrik Amneus. We reiterate that request for action by the Secretariat.

Thirdly, as to the judiciary, a greater level of judicial activity has been seen in Kosovo, particularly recently with the increase in the number of personnel and material resources. The appointment of about a dozen international judges to look into ethnicity-related crimes has brought about great improvement in judicial actions. The swearing in of 137 judges on 24 January was also a significant step. We believe that this reinforcement will visibly contribute to uprooting crime and fostering multi-ethnic coexistence.

Fourthly, with respect to depleted uranium, my delegation expressed the view that it would be appropriate for the Council to watch the question of links between depleted uranium and medical cases in Kosovo. We are to some extent relieved that the team of experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), investigating upon request of UNMIK, has found no proven link between exposure to depleted uranium and the onset of cancers, congenital abnormalities or serious toxic chemical effects on the organs of the peacekeepers or residents of Kosovo. We note that the WHO team of experts has recommended that its findings be confirmed by a larger body of independent experts.

We are encouraged by the attention given by the new head of UNMIK to the immediate priorities in Kosovo. We particularly note his emphasis on the completion of a legal framework that will enable the

participation of all Kosovars, including minorities. We believe that only leaders democratically elected through a fair and full participatory process are in a position to put forward views on the critical outstanding issues in Kosovo.

In the past 19 months, Kosovo has come a long way, from being a war-ravaged society to one with prospects of a peaceful future. The constant support of the international community is crucial at this point to sustaining and consolidating the gains achieved and to moving towards a future of peaceful coexistence.

Mr. Harrison (United Kingdom): I would like through you, Sir, to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his useful briefing on recent developments in Kosovo. The Ambassador of Sweden will address the Council later on behalf of the European Union. My delegation, naturally, endorses the comments he will make. I would like to highlight just four points.

First, the recent violence in Mitrovica and the security incidents in southern Serbia outlined by Mr. Guéhenno this morning are being committed by extremists. These extremists are working against peace and against the wishes of their wider communities. Their actions are unacceptable. My Government condemns the actions of the perpetrators of these incidents unreservedly. The only long-term solution to the problems of Kosovo, including those thrown up by the events in Mitrovica and southern Serbia, is through dialogue and ethnic reconciliation. In this regard, we fully support the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force to resolve the situation in Mitrovica.

Secondly, more needs to be done to address and improve the law and order situation throughout Kosovo. We welcome the high priority that has been given to this issue by Mr. Haekkerup and we welcome the fact that Mr. Guéhenno gave considerable attention to the issue in his briefing. We would welcome Mr. Guéhenno's views on what more can be done. For example, does UNMIK have sufficient international judges and prosecutors for its needs and, if not, is there scope for increasing the number of judges and prosecutors, perhaps on a temporary basis?

Thirdly, the United Kingdom welcomes the plan put forward by the federal and Serbian republican Governments for southern Serbia, which was formally announced last week. We are studying it carefully. It is

encouraging that both sides appear to be willing to find a peaceful, political solution to these problems.

Fourthly and finally, last month my delegation, like many others, welcomed the draft amnesty bill on political prisoners that had been adopted by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We now need to see concrete steps. We call on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Serb Governments to release all Kosovo Albanian prisoners held without charge or on political grounds. This would be a major confidence-building measure between Belgrade and Kosovo and it would probably bring about a qualitative improvement in the security situation in Kosovo.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): I too would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing. It is unfortunate that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, is not able to meet with the Council today. I think, as Ambassador Lavrov said, it would have been useful to meet him early in his term, and my delegation looks forward to his addressing the Council soon. At the same time, we extend our support to him as he carries out the difficult tasks ahead.

In the interest of time, I will not read out my full statement, which we will post on our Web site. Today I shall try to summarize the statement, which touches on three key areas: the new violence in Kosovo, the situation in the Presevo Valley and the preparations for the elections.

In our statement at the Council's open meeting on Kosovo last month, we emphasized the aim of returning Kosovo to normalcy. Unfortunately, the events since the meeting seem to serve as a warning that things could move in the opposite direction if the Council, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) do not prevent the security situation in Kosovo, especially in Mitrovica and the Presevo Valley, from deteriorating further.

We therefore believe, as many other speakers have said, that all necessary steps must be taken to improve the security environment in both Kosovo and the Presevo Valley. What happened in Mitrovica especially was shocking. There were even grenade attacks on KFOR troops, UNMIK civilian police officers and civilian workers, resulting in scores of soldiers and policemen being injured. This cannot be

condoned when the very people who are sent to provide security and enforce law and order become the objects of violence; then things have gone seriously wrong, as several speakers have noted.

The practical effects of such developments are clear. United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations were forced to withdraw their staff from the effected area of Mitrovica and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) had to temporarily suspend freedom of movement past lines. This is, incidentally, reminiscent of the events we witnessed in the refugee area in West Timor last year, when, we recall, the Council actually reacted strongly.

Given this dangerous situation, we welcome, like France, the declaration made by the Kosovar-Albanian leaders, which condemned the violence in Mitrovica, and we call on all Kosovars to remain calm and to refrain from further acts of violence. We hope that UNMIK and KFOR can do what is appropriate and necessary to improve the security situation in Mitrovica, and, like others, we would also like to give our full support to the priority Mr. Hans Haekkerup has given to strengthening law and order in Kosovo.

Let me now turn quickly to another hot spot: the Presevo Valley. When the situation was heating up towards the end of last month, the Council made a statement to the press, and, unfortunately, all the elements of the press statement still remain valid today: violence in Presevo should cease, all ethnic Albanian extremists groups should be dissolved, all non-residents engaged in extremist activities should withdraw from their areas, and so forth. We want to impress on the parties involved that these calls should be heeded. Here — if we may make an additional suggestion — it may be useful for the Council, from time to time, to assess whether its calls, in press statements or presidential statements, have been heeded or ignored. This may show whether our press statements are actually heeded or not.

We are glad that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has formulated a peace plan for the Presevo Valley. We welcome its resolve to settle the problem peacefully and to integrate ethnic Albanians into the local structures. In the end, we believe that the solution must be a political one. This is why we are concerned to read press reports that the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB)

has rejected the peace plan, including the political measures, and has said that it will settle for nothing less than the Presevo Valley becoming part of ethnic Albanian-dominated Kosovo. We hope that the ethnic Albanians will pursue peaceful negotiations and that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will continue to exercise restraint. It is also imperative that UNMIK and KFOR take all necessary measures to prevent the movement of extremists and arms from Kosovo to the Presevo Valley.

Finally, on my third point, turning to non-security issues, we certainly take note of and support the priorities that have been spelled out by Mr. Haekkerup and also by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno this morning. The legal framework for Kosovo-wide elections must be developed before they are held. The process should involve all the relevant parties, including the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this regard, we believe that UNMIK's establishment of direct contacts with the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and an office in Belgrade is a move in the right direction. The release of political detainees from Serbian prisons and the revelation of the whereabouts of missing persons in Kosovo, should also be resolved as a matter of priority. Here again, we support the call that Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno made when he referred to this.

We believe that these measures will contribute to the reconciliation that is essential for improving the security situation. Building public administration capacity and economic reconstruction are also important and necessary for bringing Kosovo back to normal. All these priorities require that the United Nations and the international community continue to be actively involved in Kosovo.

Mr. Stoffer (United States of America): My delegation, too, would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his informative briefing, and we reiterate our support for the new Special Representative in Kosovo. We understand that Special Representative Haekkerup will be coming to New York in March, and we look forward to hearing his views on the challenges that remain in Kosovo.

The prospects of a lasting peace in the Balkans have clearly brightened somewhat due to the democratic developments in Yugoslavia last year. The successful municipal elections in Kosovo last October and the progress of the United Nations Interim

Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in implementing the results over the last several months also reassure us that we are making steady progress in implementing resolution 1244 (1999). We are glad to hear that UNMIK is moving forward on the necessary regulations, which will define the institutional framework of Kosovo's provisional self-government, including Kosovo-wide elections. We urge UNMIK to move quickly to promulgate the necessary regulations and to organize Kosovo-wide elections as soon as possible in 2001.

However, there are still some dark clouds on the horizon. The continuing unrest and violence in Mitrovica and other parts of Kosovo threaten this progress. We condemn the recent violence in Mitrovica and lament the tragic deaths that resulted, but we take note that UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) were joined by key Kosovar Albanian leaders in urging restraint and a return of calm in the troubled city. The declaration issued by Kosovar Albanian leaders in response to the recent unrest was also promising. It focused on confidence-building measures, but also expressed the commitment to freedom of movement and the establishment of functioning political structures that include all sides and factions.

While we acknowledge genuine Serb security concerns in Mitrovica, the way to address these concerns is for Serbs to cooperate with UNMIK and KFOR, participate in the administration of the city and take jobs in the Kosovo police service. We call on the democratic authorities in Belgrade to send a clear message to all those in Kosovo to participate in municipal assemblies and to cooperate with UNMIK in addressing the political and security issues that will help reduce violence and encourage Serb refugees to return and all others who have been displaced to come back to their homes.

We also strongly condemn the violence across the Kosovo administrative border, in and around the ground safety zone. We applaud the vigorous measures that KFOR has taken to control that administrative border and stop all material support for the extremists operating in southern Serbia. We continue to call on the Kosovar leadership to reject the violent approach of these individuals, and we encourage local leaders in and around the ground safety zone to cooperate with the Yugoslav authorities in finding a political solution to their problems.

We welcome the recent proposal put forward by the Belgrade Government to institute reforms, to engage local Albanian leaders, to develop a series of confidence-building measures, to restore calm and to build the foundations of peace in and around the ground safety zone. Obviously, many details remain to be worked out, and there are some aspects of the current puzzle about which we have some concern. In general, though, we believe the plan provides a sound basis on which to begin addressing the problems of the Presevo Valley.

We applaud the Yugoslav Government's restraint and its assurances that it will continue to respect the Military-Technical Agreement. The Council has expressed itself very clearly in this regard. There is no acceptable military solution to the problems in the Presevo Valley. As we understand the Yugoslav proposal, the first step is to put in place a number of reforms and to begin to engage the population of the Presevo area constructively, and we applaud that. We also understand the Deputy Prime Minister Kovic will be briefing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe later this week on this proposal, and we in the Council look forward to learning more details about this plan.

My Government has worked closely with the Belgrade authorities in supporting a political approach to the problems in and around the ground safety zone, and we will be looking forward to ways to implement the Yugoslav Government's plan.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): I am thankful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his very comprehensive briefing on the latest events in Kosovo and on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) during the period under review.

Since my country's position and assessment of different aspects of the current situation in Kosovo have been presented at our previous meetings and basically remain unchanged, I will comment only on some of the latest events in Kosovo in the context of UNMIK's activities.

The past month saw both positive tendencies towards a general improvement of the situation in Kosovo and some worrying developments in terms of security in and around the province. My country fully recognizes the constructive role played by UNMIK and

the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in facing these new challenges and in fostering further progress in implementing resolution 1244 (1999) under very difficult conditions.

We reconfirm our support for the priorities for UNMIK's activities outlined by Mr. Haekkerup and for the first steps made towards their implementation. The proper elaboration of a legal framework for Kosovo-wide general elections is of particular importance for the future of Kosovo. Therefore, we share the view that it would not be prudent to speed up the election process unless all of its aspects are clearly defined and the security situation in the region is stable enough. My delegation still believes that the Council should be briefed on the results of this work before UNMIK proceeds further with the holding of the elections.

We also find it important to implement the other priority actions set out by Mr. Haekkerup — specifically, improving the security situation in Kosovo and fighting crime through more effective law enforcement measures. In this context, we believe that recent UNMIK police actions carried out across the province against drug dealers aimed at seizing drugs and illegal weapons have proved effective and should continue. It is also noteworthy that during the past month, the regulation signed into law by the head of UNMIK in January on criminal punishment for human trafficking has started to show its first results, as the first guilty verdict for trafficking in women was issued a week ago in Kosovo.

My country is of the view that the establishment of a proper dialogue and close cooperation between UNMIK and the Yugoslav authorities is a necessary prerequisite for furthering the peace process in Kosovo. Therefore we encourage the head of UNMIK to do his utmost in this regard to ensure the earliest possible opening of UNMIK's office in Belgrade.

While noting positive trends, we still remain concerned at the security situation in and around Kosovo. We were deeply alarmed at the new flare-up of violence which took place in Mitrovica and joined the call made to local communities to exercise restraint and tolerance in relation to each other and to international personnel. In its assessment of the recent upsurge in violence in that town, Ukraine associated itself with the European Union's declaration of 2 February. We also welcome the joint declaration signed

on 1 February by UNMIK, KFOR and Kosovo Albanian leaders on the situation in that town.

At the same time, my delegation pays tribute to the courage and professionalism demonstrated by KFOR peacekeepers in easing tensions in Mitrovica and laments the injuries they sustained. It is our firm belief that any acts of violence or threats directed against international military, police or civilian personnel in Kosovo are absolutely inadmissible and should not be tolerated.

During the past month, the security situation in Kosovo and in the whole region was seriously challenged by the spreading violence in the ground safety zone, which continued to claim human lives. On 30 January, my delegation joined in the statement made to the press by the President of the Security Council condemning the ethnic attacks by Albanian extremist groups against Serbian police, calling for the dissolution of these groups and their immediate withdrawal from the area. Concern in relation to those events was also expressed in the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine of 30 January.

In our view, the situation in the Presevo Valley has reached a critical stage and could not only undermine the peace efforts in Kosovo but destabilize the situation in the whole region. Therefore, in our view, every effort should be made to end the continuing Albanian insurgency in the Presevo Valley in order to avoid the worst-case scenario. In this regard, we acknowledge the readiness of the Serbian Government to negotiate with the Presevo Albanian representatives in order to find solutions to existing problems.

We also took note of the conclusions announced at the beginning of February by experts from the World Health Organization, and confirmed today by Mr. Guehenno, that the threat to human health caused by exposure to depleted uranium in Kosovo is minimal. While we are satisfied with these conclusions, nonetheless we look forward to hearing the final results of the investigations carried out by other relevant United Nations and international agencies.

We believe that the idea of sending a new Security Council mission to Kosovo, to Belgrade and possibly to the Presevo Valley to get firsthand information on the situation on the ground, as proposed today by the Russian Federation, deserves our full support.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our view that the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is one of the basic provisions of resolution 1244 (1999) and one of the key factors contributing to stability in the Balkans. Therefore, this premise should remain a starting point for further UNMIK and KFOR activities in Kosovo and should be the basis for the Security Council's assessment of these activities.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I should like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for his comprehensive briefing.

The Chinese delegation remains concerned at the current situation in Kosovo. We condemn the acts of terrorism that have occurred recently in Mitrovica.

The Chinese delegation is of the view that the key issue now facing Kosovo is the violent conflict between ethnic communities, and in particular the fact that the life and security of ethnic Serbs cannot be guaranteed. Long-term efforts must be made to resolve this question in order to promote harmony and tolerance between ethnic communities so that they can live in peace.

Effective measures must be taken to end the violence and improve the security situation.

We have noted the recent efforts made by UNMIK under the leadership of Mr. Haekkerup, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and the four priorities that it has identified in its work. We hope that the steps being taken by UNMIK will contribute to harmony and tolerance among the ethnic communities so that they can live together peacefully. At the same time, we hope that UNMIK will cooperate with the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in taking specific and effective measures to ensure that all the residents of Kosovo can live in an environment free from violence, intimidation and harassment; to effectively protect ethnic minorities, and especially to ensure the safety of ethnic Serbs; to speed up the safe return of ethnic minority refugees; to curb extremist nationalist forces; and to ease the tension in Kosovo, so that Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) can be implemented in a comprehensive manner.

Elections in Kosovo are another focus of attention for the international community. The briefing by Under-Secretary-General Guehenno will help us to understand the developments in this field. We hope to

receive further briefings about how UNMIK is cooperating with the other parties concerned in preparing for elections so as to ensure that the whole population, especially the ethnic Serbs, can participate in them on an equal footing and that their outcome is in compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

In this regard, the Chinese delegation encourages UNMIK to further strengthen its dialogue with the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We have taken note of the reference to the actions taken by UNMIK to this end. The Chinese delegation believes that dialogue is not enough; it is more important to undertake cooperation and to pay serious attention to the views of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. At the same time, we hope that UNMIK will actively encourage and urge ethnic Albanians in Kosovo to engage in dialogue with the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and study how to solve the question of Kosovo at its roots in a fair and reasonable manner. A comprehensive resolution of the question of Kosovo must involve the full participation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In resolving the question of Kosovo, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must be fully respected. The Chinese delegation is very concerned about the volatile situation in the Presevo Valley. China appreciates the restraint shown so far by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its commitment to a peaceful settlement of the dispute. We welcome the peace plan proposed by that Government. This demonstrates the readiness and goodwill of the Serbian side to achieve conciliation with the ethnic Albanians in the region. We hope that the proposal will be received positively by the Albanian side. At the same time, the international community, including the Security Council, should also support the positive efforts of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Chinese delegation supports the proposal of Ambassador Lavrov to send a Security Council mission to Kosovo, to the capital of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to the Presevo Valley, and we hope that the Council will give it serious consideration.

With regard to the question of depleted uranium munitions, we hope that the investigation conducted under the auspices of the United Nations will proceed

smoothly and that we will be informed promptly of the harm caused to the population and the environment of Kosovo.

Mr. Cooney (Ireland): I would like to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting today, and to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his informative briefing on the situation in Kosovo. Ireland fully subscribes to the detailed statement which will be delivered by the Permanent Representative of Sweden, as the presidency of the European Union. I would like to highlight some issues which we consider to be of particular significance.

We continue to believe that full implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) must remain the aim of the international community in Kosovo. We welcome the substantial progress made in this regard and believe that the Security Council must sustain a positive momentum in the implementation of the resolution.

Last month, we welcomed Mr. Hans Haekkerup as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Since then, Mr. Haekkerup has had an opportunity to consult widely with actors in the region and to further develop his approach. While we understand the impatience of people in the region to push ahead with elections, we fully support Mr. Haekkerup's view regarding the need to establish a legal and administrative framework before such elections can take place.

Last month, we had the opportunity to receive a briefing from the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, who confirmed that eight months of conceptual and technical preparation are needed. Ireland believes that this is essential in order to define the mandate and composition of a Kosovo-wide assembly, to fully implement the results of last year's local elections and to complete voter registration, so that all ethnic groups will be properly represented in the next elections. It will also be necessary to define an executive body which will be accountable to the assembly.

Like our partners in the European Union and others in this Chamber, we are concerned about recent incidents within Kosovo, mainly in the area of Mitrovica, as described earlier by Mr. Guéhenno. Such violence and use of inciteful rhetoric can only have negative consequences, and we urge political leaders in

Kosovo to take more responsibility for developing a peaceful and tolerant society. We condemn the attacks on international personnel. The international community must be allowed to fulfil its duties without being subjected to such unacceptable violence.

My delegation is also extremely concerned about the violence in southern Serbia. We repeat our strong condemnation of this violence, which endangers not only the Presevo Valley, but the overall security of the region. We commend the efforts of the Kosovo Force to prevent an escalation of the situation, as well as the restraint shown by the Yugoslav authorities and their commitment to respect the Military-Technical Agreement and the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999). Ireland believes that the international community must address this problem in a sensible and resolute manner. We welcome the development of recent initiatives that stress the need for a long-term, comprehensive settlement, including that put forward recently by the Yugoslav authorities, which we are studying carefully with our European Union partners.

Ireland believes that the recent political changes within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will continue to have a positive effect on the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. However, we note that the situation of Kosovar Albanian political prisoners held in Serbia is not yet fully resolved, despite the welcome adoption of the amnesty law. We applaud the efforts of UNMIK as outlined by Mr. Guéhenno in this regard, and we join with others in calling for appropriate legal channels to be found for the speedy release of these people, many of whom have been held in detention for over two years. We believe that a swift conclusion to this issue would be an important step towards reconciliation.

Progress must also be made regarding missing persons, as well as in facilitating the return by Kosovo Serbs and others to their homes in Kosovo. We urge all Governments of the region to develop further confidence-building measures and to work towards peace, based on democratic principles and full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and equality of all citizens and national communities.

In conclusion, we affirm that Ireland will remain fully supportive of the efforts of the Secretary-General in Kosovo.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping

Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for updating the Council on the situation in the field. We would ask him to convey to all the personnel of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) our expressions of support for their work.

In my statement today, I shall focus on three areas that I had originally planned to address, plus one that I think I should add in the light of what others have said. The first three are security problems, the organization of elections, and the peace plan proposed by the Belgrade authorities.

With respect to security problems, as has been said, we must condemn attacks on United Nations personnel, who, along with the personnel of the various humanitarian agencies, are unconditionally serving the local population; that must be understood and respected by every one of the actors in this conflict. The rights of all minorities must be respected, as stipulated in the resolutions and statements adopted by the Security Council. We reiterate our appeal to the parties to comply with those provisions.

The efforts of KFOR to control attacks by Albanian extremists carried out from the safety zone in southern Serbia have yielded results, as reflected in the number of detainees and decommissioned weapons and in the reduction in the number of violent attacks. It is clear that the situation in the zone remains tense and should thus continue to be of concern to the international community. We cannot let the Presevo valley — in which the safety zone was set up to provide a solution — become a greater problem for the region.

I believe we all agree that general elections must be organized in Kosovo. What divides us is the when, the how and the why. It is not entirely clear what bodies will be elected and what their functions will be. Until that is clarified, UNMIK cannot set a date.

Turning to the peace initiative offered last week by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Covic, we consider that the proposal to include the Albanian population in the search for a final solution for southern Serbia could be a first step towards a negotiated result. We are aware that a number of elements remain to be negotiated among the parties, and we hope that they will reach an agreement as soon as possible so as to put an end once and for all to the violence in the Presevo valley. If the parties feel

that the international community should assist in that process, we would be prepared to do this; if, on the other hand, they feel we should simply be observers, we would do that as well.

At the 18 January meeting of the Security Council on this item, I said that,

"To a large degree, the legitimacy and prestige of the Security Council and of the United Nations are at stake when it comes to the effectiveness of [the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia] and its officers. Furthermore, the validity of international criminal law is also at stake." (S/PV.4258, p. 21)

And today, I wish to — indeed, I must — conclude my statement with a comment on the same subject: the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Ambassador Lavrov of the Russian Federation made reference to the Tribunal, and specifically to Ms. Carla Del Ponte.

I knew Ms. Del Ponte when I served as Attorney-General in Colombia and when she held the same post in Switzerland. I know her commitment, her values and her respect for the rule of law. It is not my purpose to defend her today; we will have another opportunity to evaluate the work of the Tribunal. Nor do I wish to go into detail about the specific situation to which Ambassador Lavrov made reference, when he spoke of the "unacceptable" "top-secrecy" (*supra*) of the summary of the report on the topic he mentioned, and when he said that only the full report would suffice. I wish simply to observe that the administration of justice is a very difficult and risky job. But it is governed by certain sacred rules, one of which is the obligation to be discreet and not to make public anything or any evidence that could affect or destroy an investigation and that could thus weaken the Tribunal itself — which I think would run counter to what the Security Council should be doing. As I said on 18 January,

"we believe that the Security Council should do everything in its power to ensure that we achieve the objective for which the Tribunal was established." (S/PV.4258, p. 21)

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Let me join others in thanking the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for his excellent briefing. I reiterate Norway's full support for

the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, and for the main priorities he has outlined for the further work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in implementing resolution 1244 (1999).

We support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to prepare for province-wide elections in Kosovo. However, elections should be held only when all necessary requirements are met. Premature or ill-prepared elections for a provincial assembly risk undermining the stability we set out to bolster. Among the steps that need to be taken is to define the role and functions of a provincial assembly. In elaborating a framework for elections, it will be also be crucial to ensure arrangements that facilitate the participation of minorities and that allow their legitimate interests to be adequately represented.

Norway agrees that another priority must be the strengthening of the judiciary and law enforcement. Ethnically based violence must be curbed and the widespread criminality combated. The lack of public trust in the law enforcement agencies and in the judiciary makes this an urgent task.

We further appreciate the emphasis placed by Mr. Haekkerup on the establishment of a good working relationship with Yugoslav authorities. Such a relationship should allow for consultations on all main issues pertaining to resolution 1244 (1999), including the elaboration of a framework for elections and for a provincial assembly.

We are very concerned about the recent surge in tension and violent clashes in Mitrovica, which underline the need for additional confidence-building efforts. Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian leaders must take a larger responsibility for preventing further escalation of violence. Any attacks on international personnel or on minorities must be condemned in the strongest terms.

Developments in the Presevo Valley continue to give reason for deep concern. The tense situation in the area threatens to make it the next focal point of conflict in the Balkans, with potential implications not only for Serbia proper, but also for the Kosovo province as well as for neighbouring countries. With the arrival of spring, tension might easily escalate further. It is therefore paramount that the crisis be addressed now.

The Belgrade authorities have taken a constructive approach to the situation in southern Serbia. Norway welcomes the elaboration of a comprehensive plan on how to address the crisis, as recently discussed in the Serbian and Federal Governments.

The seriousness of the situation on the ground requires a rapid implementation of the plan. The dialogue established between the Serb authorities and ethnic Albanian leaders in southern Serbia is an encouraging first step in this respect. While it is urgent to initiate further confidence-building measures, we believe it is also important to provide international assistance, as requested by Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities, without delay. Given careful and speedy implementation, the constructive participation of all involved and adequate international assistance, the plan will contribute to reducing tension in the area.

The Kosovo Force and UNMIK must further strengthen their efforts to curb violations of the ground safety zone. This should be carried out in close cooperation with the Belgrade authorities. At the same time, local Albanian leaders must be discouraged from providing overt or implicit support to the armed groups.

Let me end by expressing Norway's full support for the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Its mandate also covers Kosovo, and we trust it will be accorded full cooperation by all parties involved.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): My delegation joins in thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his detailed briefing on the situation in Kosovo. It is important that the Security Council be kept fully informed of the problems and the actions taken to alleviate them.

Many of the concerns that were expressed by my delegation at the meeting on 18 January still remain of particular concern, especially the situations in the Presevo Valley and, more recently, in Mitrovica. We urge the parties involved to bring an end to this cycle of violence. Without the resolution of these problems, the hope for peace and reconciliation in Kosovo will be elusive.

We are also concerned about the potential for the destabilization of the whole region. The information

provided by Mr. Guéhenno on the actions being taken by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is welcome, and these actions have our full support. We are also pleased to hear of the confidence-building measures being employed by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and my delegation offers its full support for these measures.

The recent spate of violence in Mitrovica is extremely worrying to my delegation, and the attacks against United Nations peacekeepers is an alarming development. We are concerned that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was forced to pull its staff out of southern Mitrovica. My delegation attaches great importance to the role of UNHCR, and all parties are responsible for ensuring that its work is facilitated and unhindered. We welcome the declaration signed by the Kosovo Albanian leaders aimed at restoring calm in the area. Their role is of extremely great importance to the process of peace and reconciliation.

My delegation has in the past addressed the situation of trafficking in persons. We were pleased to learn of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) regulation making trafficking in persons a crime punishable by imprisonment. We note that recently the first guilty verdict for trafficking in women has been issued in Kosovo. We agree that the verdict sends to those who would buy and sell human beings for profit a strong message that the courts will support the police with strong sanctions.

We are also concerned about the reports of growing drug use in Kosovo, and we note the efforts of UNMIK and the Kosovo police in dealing with the situation.

My delegation continues to stress that until the issue of detained and missing persons is addressed, peace and reconciliation in Kosovo will be elusive. We hope that advances will be made in this area in the near future. We note that the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General has said that this is high on his priority list. We hope that the cooperation between Belgrade and UNMIK will lead to a solution to the problem. We urge UNMIK to continue addressing this situation. Enhanced communication with the authorities in Belgrade should help to resolve this problem, and my delegation urges enjoining the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to include these detainees in the amnesty

law or effect their releases through presidential decree. My delegation wishes to reiterate that the provisions of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) must serve as the basis for the work of UNMIK and that this resolution must be fully implemented.

We continue our support for the work of UNMIK as it works in collaboration with the people of Kosovo to prepare the province for substantial autonomy. We believe that the process of defining autonomy and of developing institutions of self-government, with the people of Kosovo sharing more and more responsibility in the administration of the province, must be actively pursued. As UNMIK develops the legal framework for Kosovo, we urge that in this context the concept of substantial autonomy be clearly defined before the province-wide elections, thereby removing the issue as a focus of the election campaign and removing any confusion as to its meaning in the post-election period.

We support the building of effective law enforcement and an effective judiciary as one of the four priorities for UNMIK. As we have said in the past, peace and reconciliation are not possible without a judiciary that dispenses justice without fear or favour.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): We appreciate the comprehensive briefing given to us by Mr. Guehenno.

The situation in Kosovo today obviously has not undergone any significant change since the Council was last briefed a couple of weeks ago. We note with concern that violence has continued, the worst case being the events in Mitrovica in which a number of United Nations peacekeepers were injured. We need hardly emphasize that the first and foremost task before the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is to curb all violence so that the process of peace-building can proceed.

We commend UNMIK for the comprehensive plan it is implementing to restore peace and normalcy in Kosovo. We wish to reiterate that Kosovars' destiny can only be multi-ethnic coexistence.

We stress that, in the preparations for the proposed elections, UNMIK must ensure that all ethnic groups have the opportunity to participate. In that regard, the opening of an UNMIK office in Belgrade is extremely important, as it would facilitate the participation in the elections of Serbs who are at present constrained from leaving their homes in

Kosovo. It is also important that the legal and administrative authorities of Kosovo should provide for the representation of all ethnic groups.

Finally, we urge the Serbian authorities to release all Albanian prisoners still being held in Serbian prisons. A general amnesty in that regard can be very helpful for the establishment of inter-ethnic harmony.

My delegation fully supports the work of UNMIK for the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Tunisia.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Guehenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his detailed and useful briefing on the situation in Kosovo.

The Balkan region has witnessed new and important developments in recent months. Those developments have been manifested in a clear political will to overcome obstacles and arrive at a final and comprehensive settlement of this issue. They have also opened up new and truly encouraging horizons for all parties. This calls for the international community to support the recently manifested will in order to establish peace in the region and implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolution 1244 (1999).

We are concerned about continuing acts of violence in the Presevo Valley, as well as in the ground security zone. Those acts could have negative repercussions, jeopardizing peace and security and undermining the efforts of the international community in the region.

At the same time, we express our optimism about the path chosen by the authorities in Belgrade to contain the crisis through political negotiations and the establishment of a plan to guarantee the rights of ethnic Albanians and improve their living conditions, which will contribute to their integration into the economic cycle and to normalizing the situation in the region.

With regard to the situation inside Kosovo, I will confine my comments to four issues we believe to be of great importance.

First, at the top of our list of priorities in Kosovo is to address the root causes of violence. Despite the marked improvement in the region, there clearly

remain sources of tension and instability. In our view, this situation cannot be overcome without achieving a permanent reconciliation among the ethnic groups that would guarantee their coexistence in peace and safety and steer them towards a better future.

Secondly, we believe that reconciliation cannot be brought about without providing the necessary, objective conditions. By this I mean finding a definitive and comprehensive solution to the question of missing persons and detainees, in particular now that Ambassador Amneus has been appointed as Special Envoy on Persons Deprived of Liberty. Arrangements should also be made to facilitate the safe return of refugees and displaced persons. They must be given the opportunity to settle and to be integrated socially and economically into society.

Thirdly, the thesis of Tunisian sociologist Ibn Khaldūn — who is known as the founder of sociology — that justice is the basis of civilization applies fully to the situation in Kosovo. An impartial judiciary would reassure Kosovo's residents, enhance their sense of security and contribute to a normalization of the situation there. We therefore urge the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo to continue to make efforts aimed at reform of the judiciary, with a view to implementing the laws in force in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner.

Fourthly, the legislative elections scheduled to be held shortly represent an important step on the road to develop a practical plan for the implementation of large-scale self-government, as envisaged in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Serious preparations should therefore be made to hold those elections within a legal context so as to guarantee the participation of all in an atmosphere of security and respect for others' differences.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I invite the representative of Sweden to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Schori (Sweden) (*spoke in French*): I offer my warm thanks to Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his important contribution.

(*spoke in English*)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The Central and Eastern

European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

First, the EU would like to pledge its full support to Mr. Hans Haekkerup, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo, as he seeks to address the remaining challenges in Kosovo.

The EU welcomes the progress made in Kosovo in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and fully supports the continued efforts of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General to establish democratic, self-governing institutions in Kosovo in order to provide substantial autonomy for the people of Kosovo in accordance with that resolution. The EU fully supports the efforts of the Special Representative to establish a legal and administrative framework for Kosovo-wide elections, aimed at creating a body of democratically elected representatives of all national communities. The involvement of the people of Kosovo in the formation of their economic, social and political future will bring in an important element of accountability and is essential for the long-term security and stability of the whole region.

It is the view of the EU that certain steps need to be carried out before elections can be held. These include the implementation of the results of the municipal elections, preparations for a new and inclusive voter registration and the definition of the mandate and composition of a Kosovo-wide assembly, as well as other Kosovo-wide institutions. It is of crucial importance that all ethnic groups participate in the elections. In this regard, the European Union encourages the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to support the electoral process and to exert their influence to ensure the participation of Kosovo Serbs in this process.

The EU supports the efforts to increase the dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and relevant institutions of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and welcomes the democratic progress achieved in that country and in Serbia, most recently

through the victory of the democratic forces in the elections of December 2000. The EU expects that this progress will enable essential political, economic and social reforms to be carried out within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which could also contribute to reducing tensions in Kosovo and in the Presevo area of southern Serbia.

In this respect, the EU urges Yugoslav and Serb authorities to find the appropriate legal channels for a speedy release of remaining Kosovo Albanian and other prisoners held without charges or on political grounds, as well as for an accounting of missing persons from all sides. Such measures could also constitute a significant contribution towards the beginning of a dialogue between representatives of Kosovo and Belgrade. The EU also reiterates its call on Yugoslav/Serbian authorities to comply with their obligation to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Action to combat violence and enhance the security situation for everyone in Kosovo should remain a top priority for UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR). It is deplorable that men, women and children in Kosovo continue to be killed because of their ethnic background and that moderate opinions expressed by politically engaged Kosovars can be dangerous to their safety.

The EU vigorously condemns the use of violence, extremism and any act which makes the coexistence of communities more difficult and which adversely affects regional stability. In this context, the EU encourages further confidence-building measures between the different ethnic communities in Kosovo and fully supports the right of all displaced people from Kosovo to return to their homes in peace, security and dignity.

The European Union is deeply concerned about the recent upsurge of violence in the town of Mitrovica. Such incidents severely jeopardize confidence building between ethnic communities and undermine the activities of the members of the international community who work in the interest of the people of Kosovo. Kosovo is benefiting from substantial international political, military and financial support aimed at creating conditions for a peaceful and prosperous future. This support requires the active cooperation of all citizens of Kosovo and their leaders.

An important aspect of enhancing the security situation in Kosovo is to reduce the overall level of

criminality and to enforce respect for the rule of law. To this end, more than 800 civilian police, as well as judges and prosecutors, from EU member States are serving in Kosovo. The EU also supports the work of the Kosovo Police Service School to train local police and police trainers. Furthermore, EU member States contribute more than 60 per cent of the troops of KFOR, which continues to play a crucial role in maintaining stability and security in Kosovo. The EU is also pleased to note that the efforts of the international community to enhance security and stabilization have been significantly supported by Central and Eastern European countries associated with the EU, as well as by the associated country Turkey, in the form of contributions of troops, civilian police and other specialists to KFOR and UNMIK.

Another priority for the European Union is to contribute to the reconstruction and economic development of Kosovo. Being by far the single largest donor providing assistance to Kosovo, the European Union has allocated nearly €900 million in reconstruction and humanitarian aid since 1998. The EU will remain at the forefront of the reconstruction efforts in Kosovo, having committed €175 million for this purpose for the year 2001. In this regard, the EU believes that it is important to continue to create favourable conditions for the economic development of Kosovo by establishing viable and efficient economic structures, including in the fiscal area.

The EU strongly condemns the violence and illegal actions by ethnic Albanian armed groups in southern Serbia, and particularly in the Ground Safety Zone, and reiterates its call, as expressed in the statement of the President of the Security Council of 19 December 2000, for an immediate and complete cessation of violence in that area. The EU calls upon all involved to exercise maximum restraint and to resolve any differences exclusively through peaceful dialogue. The EU is strongly concerned with increased tensions in the area that could impede Transport Corridor X, which constitutes one of the main northern outlets of the Balkan countries. The EU welcomes specific measures taken by KFOR and UNMIK to address the problem, including increased surveillance of the administrative boundary.

The EU also welcomes the commitment of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to work towards a peaceful settlement and to respect the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999) and the Military-

Technical Agreement, and encourages the efforts to initiate confidence-building measures in order to stabilize the situation in that area. These measures should include the extension of civil rights to ethnic Albanians in the area and concrete steps regarding the posture of Yugoslav/Serb military and police in the area.

In order to further contribute to the stabilization of the situation, the EU is currently considering an enhanced presence of its monitoring mission in the affected area.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Mladenović (Yugoslavia): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing.

The situation in Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, continues to be unsatisfactory. This is due primarily to the fact that the key provisions of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), especially those concerning the need to create a secure environment and to protect Serbs and other non-Albanians, have not been fulfilled. Constant threats, violence and armed attacks against the remaining Serbs and other non-Albanians living in enclaves provide ample evidence that not enough has been done to put tensions to rest, to have the expelled Serbs returned and to create conditions for multi-ethnic life in that southern Serbian province.

The problem of Kosovo and Metohija is very complex. It can be solved only through a consistent implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and in cooperation with the competent authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia. Attempts to solve it hastily and inadequately may only exacerbate the situation. Such an attempt is the holding of so-called Kosovo-wide elections. We consider that such elections cannot be free, fair or democratic short of a precise definition of the authorities they are to be held for and the definition of the competencies of those authorities, or without the creation of conditions for a safe return of all displaced persons. Additionally, the elections should be prepared in cooperation with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

Also, we consider that it is necessary to find a just solution for all detained, missing and abducted persons, which would contribute to building mutual trust. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will soon adopt a new amnesty law, which, we hope, will positively affect the resolution of many issues in this field. Yet the problem of the Serbs and other non-Albanians gone missing in Kosovo and Metohija since the deployment of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) remains. We demand a more robust investigation of their fate.

I would like to reiterate that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continues to be committed to the consistent implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Kumanovo Military-Technical Agreement, and it is ready to strengthen its cooperation with UNMIK and KFOR. It is also ready to conclude an agreement on their status in this Serbian province.

The difficult and tense situation in the ground safety zone, in the municipalities of Bujanovac, Medvedja and Presevo in southern Serbia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, also causes grave concern to my Government. The way the situation has evolved in this area demonstrates how dangerous it is for the region as a whole not to implement Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) fully and consistently. This is yet another reason for us to ask whether those responsible have used all the opportunities and authority at their disposal to fully meet their responsibilities stemming from that resolution.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has repeatedly drawn the Security Council's attention to the fact that the situation in the ground safety zone in southern Serbia, brought about by armed groups of Albanian extremists and terrorists that infiltrate from Kosovo and Metohija, is unacceptable. These Albanian armed groups are threatening the lives and security of local citizens, their fundamental human rights and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and thereby peace and security in the region.

It is therefore necessary for the Security Council to undertake resolute steps in order to fulfil the demands contained in its presidential statement of 19 December 2000, calling for an urgent and total end to violence, the disbandment of extremist groups of ethnic

Albanians and their immediate withdrawal from the region and from the ground safety zone in particular.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its Government recently adopted a plan and a programme for the resolution of the crisis caused by the activities of Albanian terrorist groups in the municipalities of Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja. The main characteristics of this plan include the resolution of the crisis by peaceful means, with the participation of the representatives of the Albanian ethnic community and with the support of the international community. The goal is to resolve this problem in a democratic and transparent manner.

The key goals of the plan include the establishment of the State sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in that part of their territory, the preservation and development of the multi-ethnic character of the region, respecting all civil and human rights of the Albanian ethnic community, the protection of the basic interests of Serbs in the region and of their personal property and security, and building a multi-ethnic society based on democracy, with the viable economic development of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja.

The plan envisages a three-phase resolution. In the first phase, which is under way, an appeal was sent to the Albanian ethnic community for a peaceful solution including a request that no terrorist acts be carried out until the end of the negotiations. For its part, the army and the police would undertake only defensive activity pending the end of the negotiations.

Agreement on the resolution is expected in the second phase. This would include the total and lasting cessation of all terrorist acts, the disarmament of terrorists and the dismantling of fortification structures. This would be followed by the withdrawal of military and police forces, while regular mixed local police and military units, including border control units, would remain. This would create conditions to unblock the roads and enable the free return of displaced persons. All those who did not take part in violent actions until the end of this phase would not be prosecuted. Before starting this phase, it would be necessary to reduce or totally eliminate the ground safety zone, on the basis of our previous proposals, for which we expect the international community's understanding.

In the third and final phase, full security and peace in the region will be established, which would enable the Albanian ethnic community to be integrated into the political, State and social systems and to have their human rights respected in line with the highest European standards. The integration of Albanians would reflect the local ethnic composition in the State institutions, economy and social activity. This would entail an appropriate representation of ethnic Albanians on the executive boards of municipalities and in the Government of Serbia, the elimination of all forms of human rights violations through more effective control of police and other Government bodies and free access for accredited human rights organizations to examine the situation in the field. This should create the conditions for economic and social development in the region, in accordance with agreed priorities and projects.

In adopting this plan and calling the Albanian community in the municipalities of Bujanovac, Medvedja and Presevo to negotiations, the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia has made a decisive commitment to resolving the crisis by peaceful and democratic means. We very much appreciate the support of the international community for this approach.

It is now up to the ethnic Albanian community to demonstrate whether it is truly ready to accept the plan. We underline that it is necessary to start a dialogue without delay. With the passage of time, there would be less and less chance of resolving the crisis in a peaceful, diplomatic manner. Should that not come about, the responsibility would rest with the members of the ethnic Albanian community in southern Serbia, of which the international community should take account. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia cannot exercise indefinite patience, since maintaining the situation as it is — the status quo — is totally unacceptable.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on Mr. Guéhenno to respond to the questions and comments put to him.

Mr. Guéhenno: I will convey to Special Representative Hans Haekkerup and his staff the support that was expressed around this table for his efforts.

I would like to address the one specific question that was put to me on security by the representative of the United Kingdom, and in particular on the provision of international judges.

The development of a judiciary system in Kosovo that really builds trust between the various communities is a key foundation. It is a building block of any stable peace in that part of the world. We have seen that international judges are very helpful in that respect, not only because they create the perception of impartiality and help consolidate that perception, but also because they make it easier for those local judges who want to be impartial to be so and to resist the pressures that can be exerted upon them.

In that respect, we have increased the number of international judges. Last December there were only 10 international judges and 3 international prosecutors. As I said in my briefing, we now have 12 judges and 5 prosecutors, which means that we can cover all five regions of Kosovo, with an international presence in the judiciary, which is very important.

We will continue to discuss with the Mission whether we can go further in developing the presence of international justice, because a delicate balance has to be maintained between local empowerment of justice and the international presence. This is a very delicate balance. But we will continue to discuss with the Mission whether we can make improvements and go further. We welcome offers from Member States to provide international judges, because it is a very difficult and challenging job. We are very grateful to all of those countries that have provided international judges in Kosovo.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for the clarifications he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.